JOHN BULL, week ending Nov. 28, 1942

JOHN BULL

VOL. LXXII. 1902

3D EVERY THURSDAY

NEW SHAPE OF THE WAR By A.G.G.

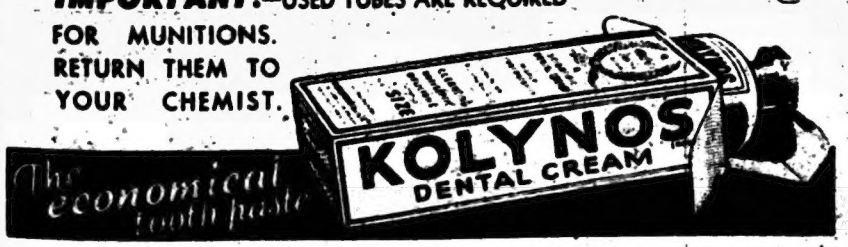
XMAS CAKE FOR YOU? see page 15

WHY THIS SLUR ON WOMEN? By The EDITOR

Canterbury lamb may be tender, but the men who hail from the ranches of the Dominion are tough—mighty tough! Small wonder that they have formed the spearhead of our attack in many theatres of war; for New Zealand is the home of men of courage and determination, splendid physique, fine features, and—good teeth, thanks to KOLYNOS, of course!

Obtainable from all Chemists and Stores.

IMPORTANT.—USED TUBES ARE REQUIRED FOR MUNITIONS. RETURN THEM TO YOUR CHEMIST.



NEW FUEL-SAVING WAY TO WASH CLOTHES

METHOD: *Half* the amount of water; *two-thirds* the amount of Rinso; soak only, don't boil.

NEXT washday, make a point of trying this new way of washing clothes! It has been tested out by the Rinso Wash-Testing Laboratories and it makes your clothes beautifully clean. Because it's a *less-water* method, it saves fuel—which we all want to do now—and soap coupons as well.

Here's what you do:

Quick and easy

You use hot water just as it comes from the tap, but run off only *half* the amount you'd normally use. Then measure off *two-thirds* the amount of Rinso you used to use, sprinkle in and whisk up.

Sort out your whites and coloureds and put the whites in to soak for 12 minutes only. You need just enough suds to cover the clothes when they're well pressed down.

After the whites have soaked, they just require washing through and rinsing. But don't throw away your suds. Put in the coloureds next and let *them* soak for 12 minutes. Then wash and rinse.

For specially grubby places like cuffs and neck bands, wet the garment first, then smooth in a little dry Rinso. Soak and wash through in the usual way.

All-round saving

It's really wonderful how much you save with this method. You use less Rinso—actually you save one packet in three. And because you don't boil the clothes you save all the fuel you used to use for lighting the copper. You simply use hot water straight from the tap.

And don't forget, you save your own precious time and labour! This method saves 1½ hours on an average size wash, and there's no hard rubbing to do. *And it does get the clothes clean!*

Rinso suds are grand for woollies and fine things also—you know that if you're a regular Rinso user!

If you can spare a pinch of Rinso for your washing-up, remember that Rinso absorbs grease and makes china and cutlery sparkle. Let the dishes soak in the Rinso suds for 3 minutes, then give them a light wipe over as you take them out.

You'll never go back to boiling clothes once you've tried the easy Rinso way of doing the weekly wash! Be sure to try it next Monday. Rinso is a No. 1 soap powder. 7d. packet—two coupons. 3½d. packet—one coupon.

A WIDOW and mother of eight children, Mrs. Masters has a strenuous job at an aircraft factory loading trucks. But she manages to fit in the family wash in the evenings! "The new Rinso method is grand!" she says. "It does get the clothes clean and takes no extra fuel. It's easy on soap coupons, too."

R 3140-414-65 R. S. Hudson Limited

What? MILK Chocolate in wartime?

YES—A LITTLE!

Because cows always give more milk during the summer and this year they gave an unexpected surplus. Some of this surplus was made into Cadburys famous Dairy Milk Chocolate. The amount is small but we are distributing it as fairly as possible, district by district. All parts of the country have not yet been covered. Remember when you see Cadburys Dairy Milk Chocolate, please keep it for the children.

Cadburys DAIRY MILK Chocolate (IN 3d BLOCKS)

Spare the poker this winter!

Anything that makes a fire burn faster than it needs—whether in grate or boiler—is an act of sabotage against the nation's stout effort to save fuel. This is the plain fact of the case.

What do I do?

I use fire bricks at the sides of my grate. I get the habit of banking my fire and leaving it undisturbed.

I rake the boiler only enough to remove the ash; and I set the dampers for slow burning.

I keep my eye on my fuel target and my hand *off* the poker!

Issued by the Ministry of Information

Space presented to the Nation by the Brewers' Society

Care of the Skin

—IN THESE DAYS OF SOAP RATIONING

WHEN the war's won and *he* comes home, you naturally want him to find you as fresh and lovely as he remembers you now.

How can you make sure, of this—especially in these days of soap rationing?

Well, here's a new 2-minute treatment that will give your skin just the care it needs—at the same time making your soap last longer than ever before:

First, instead of rubbing your flannel on the soap tablet, simply wring it out in hot water and hold it against your face for a few seconds to open the pores. Moisten the hands and rub the Lux Toilet Soap tablet between them a few times. Then gently massage the face, moving the hands upwards in small circles. Work from chin to forehead and take special care around the nose and mouth. Rinse with lukewarm water. Finally, splash vigorously with cold water to close the pores.

This 2-minute treatment used *regularly* will keep your complexion clear and lovely.

And you'll save soap! Actually, by using the hands instead of the face flannel, you save a *quarter of the soap* you normally use.

And because the lather of Lux Toilet Soap is "active," a very little of it can remove all the dust and dirt that clog the pores, causing a dull, tired-looking complexion. That is why 9 out of 10 Hollywood film stars use Lux Toilet Soap.

3½d. a tablet (including Purchase Tax) for 1 coupon.

Lux Toilet Soap

The Beauty Soap of the Film Stars

TL 1277-9

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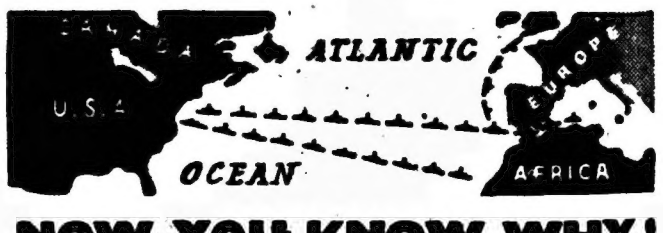
Weetabix

MORE than a Breakfast Food

WEETABIX LTD., BURTON LATIMER, NORTHANTS WX 10

THE TILES CONCERT
"Fancy expecting me to sing at the Larder Guard concert. I couldn't raise a purr for a mouse on toast!"
"Dog's ears! What do I see? They realised I needed TIBS! I'll soon be okay now!"
"They say I was a howling success. Naturally, I'm fit to raise the roof, now."
TIBS
'TIBS' are tasteless in the cats' food. From all chemists and corn merchants. 7d. for 9, 1/1 for 20.
100 PURRS IN EVERY PACKET
A product of Bob Martin Ltd. Southport

FOOD FACTS



NOW YOU KNOW WHY!

You remember how we have preached ship-savers, day in and day out. *Now you know why!* Oran, Algiers, Egypt—ships that once carried food to us now carry guns to Africa.

That's why we have brought over dried eggs instead of poultry food—(2,100,000 tons of poultry feeding stuffs would be needed to give us the food value of 80,000 tons of dried eggs).

Cheese is weight for weight more valuable than meat and needs less and much easier cargo space. We have made the cheese ration 8 oz. a week. *Now you know why!*

More and more ships are needed. Your part is to use the foods that fit into the war economy: cheese—your full ration; potatoes—plenty of them; and use less bread. Every scrap of bread saved releases ships and shortens the war.

THE RADIO DOCTOR SAYS:—

"For the school child the potato should appear in every mid-day dinner. It gives energy. The fairly large amount one can make it a substantial source of Vitamin C. Potatoes are best steamed or baked in their jackets.

Let the plan be potatoes every day, one or other green vegetables most days, a yellow vegetable, particularly carrot—two or three times a week, and some raw green salad vegetable on most days.

Go in for less common vegetables when you can get them. Try beetroot as a hot vegetable. Not only Webbmen shave on leeks. What about artichokes? Celery is good for the children, both raw and cooked."

LISTEN TO THE KITCHEN FRONT EVERY MORNING AT 8.15

THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, LONDON, W.1. FOOD FACTS No. 124

JOHN BULL

Thursday, for week ending Saturday, November 28, 1942.
93, Long Acre, W.C.2. Telephone: Temple Bar 2468

"Come the three corners of the world in arms,
And we shall shock them, naught shall make us rue,
If England to itself do rest but true."

EXIT SIR ROY

● **The man responsible for more than half the power of the R.A.F. to-day is Sir Roy Fedden.**

So says a former Secretary of State for Air.

He has produced the best radial air-cooled engine in the world. But his employers, the Bristol Aeroplane Company, would not let him control his own technical staff.

The company, according to Lord Brabazon, is a family affair. On its board are two brothers and two cousins.

To end the deadlock between these family business magnates and one of the world's best engineers, the Ministry of Aircraft Production has had to intervene.

Has it sacked some of the directors so that the designer might have a free hand? Oh, no! It has just sent Sir Roy to America!

Much the same thing happens with humbler war workers. They are apt to be moved around at the Government's dictate. But the managements of war factories remain sacrosanct.

Straight from the Shoulder

TIME TO PLAN

IT is still a race against time—both for Hitler and ourselves.

Of course, he will do his utmost to keep a foothold in Africa. In the end, no doubt, he will be dislodged.

But meanwhile he will fight a furious delaying action—to give him time to prepare the defences of southern Europe.

Yet to Come

Make no mistake about it, those defences will be good.

The heaviest battles are yet to come.

To believe otherwise would be to invite painful shocks.

Italy's Plight

Yet there are some who think the invasion of Italy will be easy, and who think that then the war will be as good as over.

Certainly Italy is in deadly peril. Her 2,000 miles of coast, the structure of her railways, her complete dependence on imported coal, makes her defence so difficult as to drive any general to despair.

Change of Mind

At first, the Germans had no intention of attempting the defence of all Italy. Their generals proposed to do no more than withdraw to a line in the extreme north, a line based on the industrial districts of Bologna, Milan and Genoa.

Hitler, presumably, has made them change their minds—as he has done several times in the Russian campaign with disastrous results.

Triple Prong

Soon we shall be bombing Italy not only from the north but from the south as well. The next step should be to blockade her by sea. Finally, our land forces should be able to invade.

That is obvious enough to anyone who cares to think of the problem. The vastness of such an undertaking should be equally plain.

What are its chief demands?

First, aircraft. We must produce still more 'planes. And we must maintain the superiority of their quality.

Sea Posers

There is the U-boat menace to face. The enigma of the French fleet. The liquidation of the enemy air forces in Sardinia, Sicily and Tunisia, which cover a triangle across the narrowest straits of the Mediterranean; a triangle that so gravely hampers our shipping.

All these problems must be settled before we can begin the gigantic task of conveying a huge expeditionary force to the Italian coasts.

Other Targets

Moreover, Italy is but one possible target.

There is Greece, now filling with German troops. There are the Occupied Countries of northern Europe—and Germany itself.

In all, opposition will be strong. Thus the "defence in depth" along the coasts of Holland and Belgium is now a belt thirty-five miles deep.

Savagery

Above all, let us remember this:

When the Germans are cornered like rats, they will fight with the savagery of rats.

Ask the Russians!

Japan's Eclipse

The same must be said about the Japanese. Ask the Americans in the Solomons! Ask the Australians in New Guinea!

Japan's losses are mounting like rockets. But her troops can be trusted to fight on with fanatical ferocity.

So a Burma campaign will be a tough job. It is a job we must tackle in order to reopen the way to China and a direct attack on Japan itself.

Peace Prospects

In brief, we have reason for optimism but not for complacency. The biggest tasks have yet to be faced, both in the war itself and for the peace that would make the war worth winning.

Already the tasks of peace are manifest. So are their terrific difficulties.

Need to Plan

It is said that they can be left to look after themselves. How can we plan the peace, it is asked, until we know what the world will be like after the war?

But we know quite well what the world will be like unless we are ready for peace.

There will be misery, not prosperity. There will be anarchy instead of order.

Reconstruction

Sir Stafford Cripps has courageously and candidly proposed a new political structure for Europe.

Mr. Kerstens, a Dutch Minister, urges a Combined Chief of Staffs Committee to plan economic reconstruction.

Politics and economics are interlocked. Therefore the Cripps suggestion and the Kerstens demand both go only half the way.

Reshaping the World

What we need is a World Reconstruction Council, convened by the United Nations.

A council comprised not only of statesmen and economists, but a council where the voices of Organised Labour and industry would also be heard.

Urgent Question

It should be established at once. For delay might well prove disastrous.

More than a few months will be required to frame the plans by which a real peace will be won when the guns become silent.

A quick victory might catch us nodding.

Enough to Do

The formation of new frontiers and new governments could wait.

But we have simply got to be ready to distribute food, to make clothes and build houses, to supply transport and revive the shattered social services, directly the Occupied Countries are liberated.

Opposition

We must equally be ready to build that Better Britain we have promised our troops when they return.

They and all our war workers must be given the jobs, the decent houses, the more equitable system of social justice, that are so frequently forecast in the speeches of politicians.

But opposition will be fierce. It is already being marshalled.

Wire-pulling

Vested interests are talking darkly of their "protection." The Beveridge Plan is being assailed openly and by tricky insinuation. Diehards are pulling political strings.

Even Cripps, who so daringly discusses the future of Continental countries, is constrained to compromise and temporise about reform here in Britain.

Blank Negative

There are also the "go-slow" advocates such as the Earl of Radnor, who finds it so hard to realise that worthwhile planning must be constructive, who would rather say "Don't" than "Do."

He would wish us to "try to confine planning to the negative rather than to the positive planning development."

We Had Some

That was British policy before the war.

We had planning that provided an unemployment benefit to save three million workless people and their families from starvation. We had no planning to provide them with work.

We banned jerry-building. We did not provide the decent houses that so many of our people lacked.

Never Again

Those days are past. Their follies must not return.

The public is determined they *shall* not return.

And the public requires its leaders to provide not promises but proof that a new and more sensible system shall prevail in future.

Half-and-Half

It will not be enough to introduce a few reforms on which all the political Parties are agreed.

That is apparently the official policy—at the moment. We shall be given a sop, such as educational reform, to encourage us to believe that our leaders are really reform-minded. And that is all.

The bigger—and controversial—measures will be quietly shelved.

Inviting Trouble

But JOHN BULL does not believe the public will be hoodwinked by such a manœuvre. The public is more politically awake than ever before.

And unless our leaders recognise this fact, they will get the trouble they invite.

Now to Plan

That is why the Government must cease dithering and equivocating. It must face squarely the issues of both war and peace.

No doubt its plans are made for the next great development in the war.

IT MUST NOW START PLANNING THE DEVELOPMENTS OF THE PEACE TOWARDS WHICH WE ARE SO SURELY MOVING.

(Continued overleaf)

"WE MUST EXPECT BIGGER AND MORE DESTRUCTIVE BOMBS."
—The Minister of Health at a recent conference in London.

Underwritten at LLOYD'S

A FREE AIR RAID INSURANCE POLICY

FOR EVERY READER

Readers who have not already registered can obtain the necessary Registration Forms from "John Bull's" Insurance Dept., 128, Long Acre, London, W.C.2.

STRAIGHT FROM THE SHOULDER

CONTINUED FROM PRECEDING PAGE

THE fight begins.

And we're not thinking of Africa.

Here in Britain the struggle between the forces of Progress and Reaction has started with Mr. Bevin's plan to reform the rotten conditions in the catering trades.

New One

The 180 M.P.s who oppose him cannot defend those conditions. Instead, artfully, they say the Government promised not to introduce "controversial legislation" during the war.

"Controversial" means anything the Diehards don't like.

Truce Truth

Similarly, they assert that M.P.s who press for action *now* are breaking the "political truce."

But there is no political truce. There is only an electoral truce. A very different matter!

Lip Service

Now the fight is on. The public will be able to see which M.P.s—of all Parties—are on the side of real reform and those who pay lip service to it so long as they think it has no chance of being brought into effect.

United Front

Is the Government on the side of reform? Cripps has spoken out boldly. Bevin has acted boldly. But the case of John Parker suggests that not all their colleagues at the Cabinet table are quite so eager for social changes as they deem it politic to pretend.

Dropped

Young Mr. Parker was to have seconded the Address when Parliament reassembled.

Mr. Parker is M.P. for Romford. He is also secretary of the Fabian Society, which urges wide measures of social reform.

The Diehards took fright. They thought him too revolutionary to speak on the King's Address.

So, Mr. Parker was dropped and his place filled by a more "safe" and stolid Labour M.P.

Too Old at 60!

It will also be a pity if John Marchbanks drops out of public affairs. He is retiring from the N.U.R. under the age limit, and there is no word of offering him a seat in Parliament.

He would be much more vigorous there than some younger M.P.s we know.

Bombed-Out Hardships

Among the claims which M.P.s should press vigorously is that of the bombed-out for a better deal.

"The indifference, amounting often to callousness, on the part of officialdom is beyond belief," one victim tells us. But we believe it because we happen to know quite a few examples of it.

Made to Pay

Officialdom will quite cheerfully send a £5 bill for removing furniture from a bombed house. Then it will demand 6s. or 7s. a week to store the stuff.

Only by pleading dire poverty can the householder receive help towards paying these expenses. Usually, too, he and his family must double his costs by going to live in furnished rooms.

Then comes the scandalous business of assessing the damage he has suffered.

Going Down

Scandalous, because this is what often happens:

"What did you pay for the bedroom suite that's been destroyed?" the valuer asks.

"£40."

"When?"

"Ten years ago."

"Well, it would be worth about £10 now."

Good for the Government

Of course, it would cost more than £10 to replace that furniture nowadays—and more than £40.

But down goes the amount of £10 for the Government to pay up after the war. And so the process is continued in every room of the bombed house.

The Difference

Note this point: claims for bombed "private chattels" are entrusted to district valuers or Customs officers who may have no knowledge of household prices.

● The Sea Rescue lads are feeling hurt.

You have read about their exploits often enough. They are the R.A.F. men whose boats put out in the roughest weather to pick up air crews forced down in the North Sea or the Channel.

They asked permission to wear a special badge to distinguish them from men on ordinary ground duties. After a year's consideration, their request has been rejected.

JOHN BULL suggests that it should be reconsidered. After all, air crew men are allowed—very rightly—a distinguishing and distinguished wing or pair of wings on their tunics.

Whereas the claims for bombed businesses are handled by experts appointed by the Board of Trade.

JOHN BULL thinks they should also be responsible for deciding disputed "private claims"—and that the bombed-out should be allowed to refurnish at once free of purchase tax.

Shortage

Next subject for active M.P.s: more than 5,000 houses are wanted *now* for farm workers. The building industry is within sight of finishing its war programme.

So the builders, before being called-up for the Army, should be set to work on those much-needed rural houses.

East End

Which reminds us of all the plans for rebuilding London's West End. What a pity the planners do not seem to have heard of the East End!

Not only in London, but in other cities.

Shame on Scotland

That, in turn, reminds us of a Scots ex-soldier.

He has lived in his present town since 1920. He was married the following year, and ever since has had to live in furnished rooms because he can't get a council house.

Three times he has been sent to a sanatorium.

Six to a Room

Now he lives in one room with his wife, two boys of nineteen and fourteen, two girls of seventeen and five.

Officialdom is glad to have him working on munitions. But officialdom can't find him a house.

And some officials are surprised that tuberculosis is increasing.

Floating Empire

From the Norwegian Government comes a booklet that makes us both proud and humble.

We are proud to be Allies of that country which consists of 150,000 islands but only 3,000,000 people. Proud, because of the magnificent service of Norwegian seamen—their tankers, for instance, have carried 40 per cent. of the oil brought to the Allies in all the theatres of war.

We're Envious

Humble, because Norway has taken far-reaching measures to safeguard her seamen's lives and improve their conditions. They are entitled not only to free medical care in all cases of illness, but they and their families receive an allowance when they are unfit for work, and a pension for long disability.

We don't do that for our seamen.

Foreign Troops

German and Austrian refugees in the British Army would probably have short shrift if captured by the enemy. So we said recently when urging easier and quicker naturalisation.

Well, Authority has acted.

Making it Plain

But all it has done is to erase the name of the men's birthplace from their pay-books, which makes their nationality about as plain as if the word "Germany" had been allowed to remain.

Incidentally, as the erasure is not initialled by an officer, the men are apt to get into trouble with the military police!

In the Cold

Further stupidity—and injustice—concerns a thousand ex-Servicemen in the Civil Service.

Though they have been Civil Servants for twenty-two or more years, they are still ranked as "temporaries." And soon they will reach the age-limit and be kicked out into the cold without pension—for "temporaries" are not eligible for pension.

There and Back

As for present-day Servicemen, we don't begrudge them their occasional pleasures. Far from it.

But we hope it isn't true that 'buses were hired to bring guests to a recent Army dance in the West Country; one 'bus is said to have travelled thirty miles, another twenty miles.

Fancy Frills

Not only petrol and rubber must be saved. So, of course, must metal. Yet it seems that men are busily casting large metal nameplates to adorn railway engines.

Such frills will surely not enable those locos to pull heavier war loads.

Souvenirs

Surely, too, workers could be better employed than in polishing and engraving the lumps of A.A. shells that are now being sold in shops as "souvenirs of the Battle of Britain."

It will be time to commemorate the war when we have won it.

Note to Housewives

Another minor oddity introduces the major subject of food distribution.

In some districts, onions are miserably scarce. In small South Country towns and so big a Midlands town as Leicester, they are piled high on the market stalls.

Perplexity

No less curious to our eyes are the different ways in which untrained magistrates appear to hold the scales of justice.

Two 'bus girls appeared before the Coventry magistrates. One had worked only 397 hours out of a possible 633. She was fined £5.

The other had worked 459 hours out of a possible 609. *She was sentenced to a month's hard labour.*

We Wonder

The lord of a Surrey manor has been fined 2s. 6d. for allowing a bonfire to burn after dark—the fire brigade had to be called to put it out. The same magistrates proceeded to fine a woman £2 for letting a light shine from her window.

Was she punished the more because the fire brigade had *not* been called to her house?

Behind the News

● **Row over Rommel threatens to split German High Command. His many enemies are now coming out into the open.**

● *Prussian officers say that the first Field-Marshal to suffer decisive defeat has disgraced the German army and should be punished.*

● But the anti-Rommel campaign is actually led by Air-Marshal Kesselring, with whom he shared command in the Mediterranean.

● **Hitler is likely to move his Field H.Q. from Russia to the Balkans.**

● *His efforts to organise a Balkans supply organisation for his Mediterranean Forces are meanwhile being thwarted by Mihailovich and his Serb guerillas.*

● **Moreover, his plans for winter air supply to Russia have been upset by the need to transfer transport 'planes to the South.**

● **Further evidence of confusion: In the ten days before Nehring was given command in Tunisia, three senior generals were appointed and recalled!**

● *Berlin is shocked by Portuguese and Spanish "ingratitude" in rejecting Nazi offer of "protection"—which included demand for U-boat bases.*

● And Nazi "U-boat spies" are being run out of Portuguese East Africa's ports.

● **Laval's fear of assassination has increased. He now uses a bullet-proof car, travels fast and sleeps in a different place every night.**

● *Horthy, too, is in fear of his life. He thinks the Germans may murder him because they want complete control of Hungary in view of the Mediterranean situation.*

● **Finally, big developments may come on Murmansk-Leningrad front. Nazis are hurriedly building fortifications in case the Finns adopt a "go slow" policy.**

WHY THIS SLUR ON WOMEN?

WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOUR. By THE EDITOR

MILLIONS of our women are being insulted and humbugged, mulcted and cheated.

That is strong language. But it is used deliberately, for the facts are plain.

It is a fact that more than 8,000,000 women have registered for National Service and more than 6,000,000 are hard at work.

It is a fact that in the Forces and the factories, in Civil Defence and on the land, they are working as gallantly and as zealously as their husbands and brothers.

Every Minister has said so. Every distinguished visitor, such as Mrs. Roosevelt, has agreed.

But Mrs. Roosevelt will not be able to tell her fellow-countrymen that they are treated as fairly as men. No Minister here can deny that they are contemptuously treated in the main, as men's inferiors.

It is a fact that large numbers of women in the factories are rated more cheaply than men.

Their wages are less. Their pension is smaller. Their prospects of training and promotion are inferior.

Their life and health are less valued.

It is a fact that women ambulance drivers, women wardens and firewomen endured the same frightful bombing in the "blitz" as men.

But they are paid less. Their injuries are more poorly compensated.

This preposterous discrimination has now reached the limit of insult.

It is levelled against every married woman who has taken a job—those women who have been urged by the Government to leave home and at least to volunteer for part-time work.

The post-war credit notices respecting the money they have earned and the tax they have paid are being sent to their husbands—not to them!

True, they can demand separate assessments and credits. But those who do not know they have this right will not be given it.

No wonder, then, that one M.P. has asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer:

"When will the Government cease treating women as chattels and treat them as citizens?"

There is another question which must be put:

Why is a mother's life reckoned of less worth than that of an unmarried young man who has no responsibilities?

For that is the monstrous contention enforced by the present compensation rates for war injuries.

The highest rate for a woman is 28s. a week. The corresponding rate for a single man is 35s. a week.

War-blinded Muriel Smart, of Plumstead, receives a pension of 24s. 2d. a week. Had she been a man, she would be paid an extra 10s. a week!

A woman who loses a leg in an air raid can claim 9s. 8d. a week compensation. But a man's leg is valued at 13s. 8d.

How can this curious difference be excused by the muddle-headed bigots who framed those rates?

Certainly not on the score of a man's greater responsibilities. Because, you see, the allowance to dependants is the same for both sexes.

Thus a totally disabled widower with two children would get 14s. 7d. a week in respect of them and 34s. 2d. for himself, or 48s. 9d. in all.

But a widow, in exactly similar circumstances, and receiving the same amount for her two children, would be paid 38s. 9d. in all—that is to say, 10s. less than the man.

It may be that the Government has fixed these allowances with an eye to workmen's compensation payments, which are normally lower in the case of women workers.

Yet, as the *Times* has pointed out, "the principle of a war injuries scheme must surely be equal compensation for equal injury."

This is not only a big principle. It is one which affects great numbers of the population.

There are between 3,000,000 and 4,000,000 women belonging to A.R.P., N.F.S. and nursing services, quite apart from the fire guards.

Every one of them is concerned. No body of men in these Services opposes equality. On the contrary, an overwhelming majority demands it.

The root of this unfair discrimination, of course, goes deeper than the war. It goes right down to the Big Business demand for cheap labour.

The trade unions were rather slow to see that the underpayment of women workers must tend to keep all wages down.

But the T.U.C. now stands solidly behind the principle of equal pay for equal work. It will not be satisfied until women are paid "the rate for the job."

Nor will JOHN BULL.

But this fight for justice is going to be a hard one.

Mr. Ernest Bevin, the Minister of Labour, may soon have to break the deadlock between the employers and the unions in the great engineering industry.

So far there is no question of full equality in the industry except for skilled labour. But the unions are asking that unskilled women shall receive not less than 85 per cent., and semi-skilled women not less than 90 per cent., of the men's rate.

The employers will not consent. Some of them, after "the ground has been broken" for certain mechanical operations, put women on the job and reduce its classification from "man's work" to "woman's."

Which means that work previously rated as semi-skilled and which brought a man's wages to 65s. a week plus bonus is now carried on by women at 25s. a week with 18s. war bonus, or 43s. in all.

Certainly this is not a general practice. But such things happen, and will always happen until the rate for the job is established as a solid rule in industry.

Outside the great industrial undertakings, discrimination between the sexes becomes even more marked.

The banks—and we instance them because they are supposed to set a lead—pay women clerks something between half and two-thirds of what they pay the men.

In most offices and shops, in a great variety of civilian jobs still essential to the country, there is a similar disparity between the earning power of men and women doing equal work.

The Civil Service offers no exception to the prevalent bad rule. And there is the Land Army, which has a nice new £100,000 Benevolent Fund to meet "cases of hardship."

There ought not to be any cases of hardship. They arise because the "Land Girls" are not provided with proper pay and conditions for their splendid work.

They receive no wages during sickness. Indeed, it often happens that when they fall ill they are discharged with nothing but a week's wages and 12s. 6d. a week health benefit!

JOHN BULL *regards it as an insult to the public for the authorities to evade their plain responsibility by asking for charitable subscriptions.*

ABOVE all, it is a slur on British women that they should continue to be rated so cheaply by the Government and employers.

Once again, last week, the Government dodged its duty to make compensation and pension rates the same for men and women.

Through the gentle mouthpiece of Mr. Attlee, it pleaded that if the demand were granted "the bigger question of equal pay for equal work" would be raised.

No doubt. But that is a question that must be frankly faced and firmly solved.

The Government must be fought until it is forced to surrender!

B.B.C. Must Give Better Variety

HAVE you listened lately to what the B.B.C. is pleased to call "variety"?

Heard the puns on words (such as the word hat misheard as cat) which pass as jokes?

And pitied the poor announcers who have the impossible task of putting a gloss on such rubbish?

B.B.C. variety—never worthy of a nation that gave the world music-halls—has truly reached its lowest ebb.

★ ★ ★

Why? Because whoever picks the programmes has no idea whatsoever what the public wants.

The inimitable Bud Flanagan told a friend the other day: "The B.B.C. doesn't seem to like my kind of stuff."

The public does, as witness the qucues at houses where Flanagan and Allen appear.

Many of our best artistes say the same thing: "I can't seem to hit on the stuff the B.B.C. wants."

They have no inferiority complex about it. They know they are pleasing the great British public.

But pleasing the variety department of the B.B.C. is apparently a different matter.

Then notice how the good variety shows — "Happidrome," "Hi, Gang!" and "Music Hall" are cases in point — disappear when they have well and truly hit public fancy.

Many of them were good without being brilliant. But they were enjoyed. And, with the full co-operation of the artistes engaged, they could have been made the basis of something better.

But they have been snatched away to be replaced with the dull, pawky, and sometimes semi-idiot stuff that passes for variety to-day.

Now the B.B.C. does many good jobs of work.

Variety happens to be it's worst. And this at a time of stress and strain when, more than ever before, variety should be the spice of life.

★ ★ ★

We invite the Corporation to send representatives round and about to find out what the public really wants in the way of music-hall entertainment — and then give it.

Some years ago we published a letter from a woman reader who, while at a party, heard the following joke broadcast three times in an evening from three different "funny" men:

"Hungry? I should say so. When I went to a restaurant for dinner I sat next to a cross-eyed woman and she ate my meal."

That reader asked us to imagine what torment she felt at that party—for she, through an accident, suffered from that affliction which these funny men call cross-eyes.

★ ★ ★

The B.B.C. saw that letter, thanked us for publishing it, and added that they were going to stop the cruel "humour" which earned laughs by pillorying afflictions.

That's why we know that the B.B.C. is not too haughty to learn.

And now we want the B.B.C. to give the *real* artistes a chance, the men and women who can rock a theatre without stabbing people to the heart, who discern the difference between "popular" material and tripe, who do not assess the great British public as a crowd of nit-wits.

They are waiting—a little perplexed as to why the public likes them and the B.B.C. doesn't.

OPEN LETTERS

Rt. Hon. ERNEST BEVIN, M.P., Minister of Labour

DEAR SIR,—A Surrey girl was trained for munitions as a sheet metal worker. She passed four tests and was then sent to a factory—but not as a sheet metal worker.

Told to be a fitter, she was also warned not to do more than a certain amount of work.

In the factory, men were trying to do the sheet metal work for which she had been trained at the public expense. She asked permission to help them.

"The union wouldn't allow it," they told her.

Eventually she complained to your Ministry. It was admitted that her training to read and work to blue-prints was being wasted. And so she was transferred to a toolmaking shop—but still *not* as a sheet metalworker!

Now, I would like to think that case unique. But other complaints I have received do not encourage confidence in the results of your training schemes.

Is sufficient care taken to place trainees where they can be most useful to the war effort? Are some Diehard unions still allowed to clamp their heavy hand on plans to expand the munition industries?

I'm sure the front-line lads who need those munitions would like to know the answers.—JOHN BULL.

Admiral CHESTER NIMITZ, Naval C.-in-C. in the Pacific

DEAR ADMIRAL,—Most emphatically you've done it again. So emphatically that the Japanese must be anxiously counting the warships left to them.

Maybe they will make yet another attempt to dash through the gauntlet of iron. Not merely to "save face." But because capture of the Solomons is a cardinal point of their strategy.

Well, they will have to be quick about it. Otherwise their land forces at Guadalcanal may be pinched out before reinforcements can reach them.

Personally, I think the days of Japanese conquest are over. For that, the United Nations will have to thank the brilliant tactics of yourself and your assistant admirals who have so quickly crippled the immense sea power of the enemy.

More than 240 Jap warships and transports sunk. Some 260 damaged.

Six aircraft carriers at the bottom of the sea; nine "winged." Twenty-one cruisers sunk, seventy damaged. Thirty-nine destroyers destroyed, forty-nine damaged.

A list so long as to be almost incredible. A list of the greatest series of disasters ever suffered by a naval Power.

I expect you will add to it should the enemy come back for more punishment. And I expect you rather wish he would.—JOHN BULL.

Air Chief-Marshal Sir PHILIP JOUBERT, Commander-in-Chief, Coastal Command

DEAR SIR,—Your name isn't much in the news nowadays. It should be.

You have done a grand job in connection with the African landings. You have a still bigger and more decisive task to carry out.

Germany is building many more submarines than at one time was thought possible.

And she is building them faster than we can sink them.

To recognise this ugly fact is not to discredit the work of the men you command. On the contrary.

The R.A.F. and the Navy have destroyed the enemy's "steel fish" by the hundred. Otherwise we should still be besieged.

But I believe you could have done even better had you received better support from the Cabinet.

My belief is shared by Lord Hankey, than whom no one knows more of Imperial defence and strategy.

He says bluntly: "Technically our scientists, sailors and airmen have solved the problem of combating the submarine, but sufficient material has not been forthcoming."

He adds, as I made plain months ago, that you have often been forced to accept "the second best."

The egregious folly of the niggardly policy by which you have been half-starved should now be plain even to the Government.

Not only did your Command help to cover the African landings. Over a period of months it swept the Bay of Biscay entirely clear of U-boats and thus made possible the immense convoys of British and U.S. troops.

Given the goods, I know you can repeat this success in every strategic sea and thus assure us of complete triumph.—JOHN BULL.

Rt. Hon. ERNEST BROWN, M.P., Minister of Health

DEAR SIR,—To avoid a "strike" by panel doctors you had better yield to their demands. Though it is too late for you to do so gracefully, you can at least restore harmony by acting quickly.

The doctors have made it clear that unless you grant them a better fee they will withdraw from the National Health scheme.

I know how reluctant they are to take this drastic step. And I, for one, cannot accuse them of any lack of public spirit.

They have become shockingly overworked since war began. They have had to take over many extra patients because of the medical call-up; they must be prepared to sign as many as thirty kinds of official forms for their patients—usually without fee.

As one of their spokesmen has put it, the burden of increased sickness in the country has fallen on them.

Rises in the cost of equipment and living expenses have hit them badly.

Surely these are adequate reasons for official reconsideration of their claim to higher payment from the State!

Surely no Minister of Health can remain inactive when the great mass of insured workers is threatened with a breakdown of the panel scheme!

And surely you will no longer maintain that you have said the last word!

Whether you like it or not, the final word has yet to be uttered.—JOHN BULL.

Mr. R. C. MORRISON, M.P., Tottenham

DEAR SIR,—A cottage let unfurnished before the war for 3s. 6d. a week now fetches 35s. a week.

It is described as "furnished," but the furniture comprises only a table and some old chairs.

Small London flats, furnished so modestly that the landlords must blush with shame, are priced at five and six guineas a week.

Servicemen's wives, wanting to be near their husbands' camps, are asked as much in the country.

Indeed, some officers have been obliged to pay up to ten guineas for a small furnished house rented unfurnished by its owners at 10s. or 12s. a week.

Besides, the old racket of "key money" or premium is again flourishing.

The trouble has arisen because the Government's rent policy has been as murky as any November fog; its "safeguards" for tenants are about as thin as a morning mist in May.

I am glad you have told Parliament (as I have said in print) that it should be possible to fix a fair rent for all kinds of furnished accommodation.

But I am dubious whether you will succeed in persuading the Government that the racketeers can be routed.

Though our authorities are capable of making the most meticulous yet immense preparations for a military offensive, they are apt to shelve smaller problems of domestic policy as "too difficult for action."—JOHN BULL.

ARGUE IT OUT By PALLAS

The Margin of Courage

WE'VE all read the word "margins," in connection with the progress of the war. The Battle for Stalingrad was one of the margins—margins of reserves.

History records how slender sometimes were the margins of victory which altered its course.

One of the most recent examples was that taken by the U.S. Congress a year last August to prolong military service and thus keep together the U.S. Army as a nucleus of the vast forces being trained to-day. A majority of one vote decided that issue.

And looking back through the years it seems to me that in every vital struggle the margin of success or victory has been small.

More often than not it has been the margin of spiritual courage that carried the day. The tenacity of the pioneer, the zeal of the reformer.

The passionate faith of the righter of wrongs are all qualities which have their foundation in courage.

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It was the margin of courage that kept us spiritually strong and united in those days of foreboding that followed the fall of France.

That same margin was drawn ever more deeply on when the *Luftwaffe* smashed at our towns and cities.

The margin of courage is the greatest weapon in our armoury. It is as necessary on the home front as on the battlefield.

It is an expression of faith, an outward fortitude, and a supreme belief in the ultimate triumph of decency.

Not only did the margins of reserves save Stalingrad. More, much more, went into the struggle than that.

Men of the Red Army fought to the death because their courage was a sublimation of all they held dear.

Here the margin of courage was translated into the margin of sacrifice. For what courage is worth having if it is not linked to the fierce determination to give everything for a cause?

Nurse Cavell comes to mind. She had courage—not the physical courage of the soldier who tests his strength against the enemy; not the courage of desperation, but the courage that comes from the heart and the soul and the spirit.

She said before she died before a firing squad on the outskirts of Brussels during the last war: "Patriotism is not enough."

People to-day with reason, with intelligence and with humanity know how right she was. They know that the virtue of courage is the virtue, if necessary, of dying for an ideal, for the lovely things one has dreamed of, suffered for, and, maybe, seen achieved, no matter how slight the degree.

Courage without the spirit of sacrifice is not uplifting. There must be no chains on courage, no ulterior thoughts which strain its purity.

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Courage must be untrammelled. It must soar on wings. It must transcend things of the flesh and of the earth.

That, I think, is the supreme courage. "A man with courage," wrote Plautus 2,200 years ago, "has every blessing."

Then must this land of ours be blessed indeed. For the margin of the courage of the men and women of this island will be, must be, the margin of our victory.

IMMORTALS OF THE SQUADRONS—I.

★ *For long the R.A.F. kept the limelight away from particular units. Now we sometimes hear the names of squadrons that have done a particularly fine job. These stirring stories pick out what the squadrons themselves regard as their epics.*

By JOHN CASHEL

Dicky Lee—the Legend of Squadron X

When the King pinned on his medals he was Flight-Lieut. Richard Hugh Anthony Lee, rather shy and timid, and not a bit like the terror he was in the skies

IT is often said that the R.A.F. lacks traditions.

It has no Colours hanging in parent cathedrals, faded in everything but glory. No legends of Sebastopol, Rorke's Drift, Lucknow, Cawnpore.

But no traditions! Come with me to the mess of a fighter station.

Their day's work ended, young fighter pilots sprawl round a veteran. A VETERAN. Age twenty-six.

One asks whether the squadron hasn't one story that rises above all others. "A sort of legend."

"Most squadrons have," agrees the veteran. "Ours is the story of Dicky Lee."

And, as if obedient to an instinct, he turns a quick glance towards the door.

But the young pilots of No. 85 Squadron, R.A.F., press for the story.

The "veteran" begins.

He told how he first met Dicky in the earliest days in France.

He was tall, dark, slim and twenty-two. And very shy and self-effacing until he got into his Hurricane, when he became one of the cleverest and fieriest aerobatic pilots we ever had.

Upside-down!

Aerobatics were more likely to get you on "the Chief's" carpet than in his good books.

But some irrepressible exuberance used to make Dicky come back from patrol flying a few feet over the aerodrome—and upside-down at that.

Once he was seen flying only 200 feet over "Jerry's" lines, hot on the tail of a Junkers, pumping bursts into it while thoroughly oblivious to the intense fire coming up to him from below.

On another occasion, when his companion had been shot down and his own machine had been riddled with bullets, he fought on against numbers as if he knew he were immortal.

He revelled in reconnoitring hostile territory with Geoffrey Allard, another crack pilot of No. 85, and with "Cobber" Kain, who was with a neighbouring squadron.

"None of the three had made his name then," continued the "veteran," "but Dicky soon became sort of cat-with-nine-lives legend, a man you felt would always get back."

And looked towards the door again.

Twice, he went on, Dicky was forced down beyond our lines.

Once the Belgian security police arrested him and, their country being neutral then, were going to intern him.

But he dodged them and got back—just as, later, he wormed his way through the German lines to get back to us again.

"Each time he was missing for days and we had given him up when the door of the mess-room opened and he ambled in to make his report."

Hectic Days

And this time it was the turn of the youngest pilot present to look towards the door.

The old-timer recalled the hectic days after the German break-through.

Luftwaffe bombs rained on our aerodromes as the most bewildering evacuation of all time began.

Airfields had to move nearer to the coast night after night. Pilots shot down either in friendly territory or behind the enemy's lines had to find their way back as best they could.

Dicky Lee became missing for the third time.

He was seen by members of the squadron on May 23—in combat near Boulogne.

Pandemonium reigned below as the spearhead of German armoured forces swept round the rear of the British Expeditionary Force into the French port along roads pitiably crowded with panic-stricken refugees.

Fierce fighting was going on everywhere. Stukas were dive-bombing.

And, off the coast, the British Navy's destroyers were waiting for every fleeting appearance of the German tanks on the coastal road—and pumping lead into them.

The position was terribly obscure.

The Germans didn't claim the capture of Boulogne. The French admitted its fall.

And somewhere in that mad inferno of shell, bomb, thunderous naval broadside and spitting tank, plodding sometimes with baffled Tommies, and at others plunging through the medley of shrieking refugees, was Dicky Lee.

But his squadron didn't know.

It moved south, with other squadrons, to the Loire area, to give what fighter cover it could to our lads leaving Cherbourg and St. Nazaire when the *Lancastria* was bombed and sunk with thousands of our troops on board.

Escaped on Tank

"And just before hell broke loose again," said the "veteran" with slow emphasis, "I'll be hanged if the door of the mess didn't open again—and in walked Dicky Lee!"

He had flown to join his old squadron—from England!

And told them his story.

He had got into a vicious dog-fight near Boulogne and been shot up. He parachuted down to a road on which one-man enemy tanks were forcing a way through a steady river of frightened refugees.

Finding the road led to Boulogne, he clambered on to the back of one of the German tanks.

The sight of a man in a drab flying kit—who might have been some oily mechanic, anyway—didn't arouse any curiosity in that crazy cavalcade.

And so he got to Boulogne.

In blazing streets he had to dodge German tank troops and French soldiers and civilians who were grabbing all and sundry as possible Fifth Columnists.

He contacted British troops, reached the harbour with them, boarded a destroyer for England, found another 'plane, and—"Well, here I am, chaps!"

He was back to fight with his squadron through its last hours in France!

He returned with it to take up front-line quarters in North Essex for the Battle of Britain.

And there he became just one in those formations that rose on sun-lit wings to save Britain.

It was fight, fight, fight everywhere from East Anglia down to the Thames Estuary and beyond to the Hellfire Corner of Kent.

Dicky led a flight of those little white wings.

And, on August 18, the squadron that loved him saw him for the last time.

The graphic log of his flight that day tells what happened:

17.24 *hours: Thirteen Hurricanes took off to patrol base.*

17.30: *Directed to Thames Estuary.*

17.35: *Ordered to intercept raid near the coast.*

17.39: *Advised eighty enemy aircraft in vicinity.*

17.40: *Squadron Commander (Squadron-Leader Peter Townsend, D.F.C.) sighted enemy. Thirteen Hurricanes altered course to join battle. Attacked head-on. Raid consisted of 150 to 250 machines in rough V-formation stepped up from 10,000 to 17,000 feet.*

On sighting the thirteen Hurricanes, the two lower tiers of raiders turned seawards. The three higher formations climbed steeply, forming defensive circles.

17.55: *Two big formations of Dorniers appeared, but sheered off at sight of the fight.*

The battle developed into individual dog-fights, said the "veteran."

Hard pressed though they were, those thirteen Hurricanes shot out of the sky three Me. 110s, three Me. 109s and a Heinkel, probably destroying four others and damaging six.

One of our machines "failed to return."

At this the young pilots who were listening looked questioningly at the "veteran."

Yes, it was Dicky Lee. The story is told on his card in the Squadron Pilots' index in the one word "killed." . . .

And now I'll let that seasoned old fighter of twenty-six finish the story in his own way:

Their Share

"This squadron to which you lads ought to be proud to belong destroyed fifty-nine of the enemy in France in nine days.

"Dicky shot down more than a dozen before he returned to England.

"Our share in ten days of the Battle of Britain was forty-five—and I can't tell you exactly how many were Dicky's.

"We fought some of our toughest fights from the station where we are talking now.

"If you want our traditions, look round. That wireless there over which the stories came in. That picture of 'the Chief' over the mantelpiece. That squadron crest in a frame.

"It's all we want.

"And if you want a story of a great past, like you'll get about some of the proudest regiments in the land, I can't offer you anything better than the story of Dicky Lee who always turned up."

And he looked towards the door again.

Next Week: The Chief They Still Avenge.

AND THEN HE WOKE UP!

BOMBER crews have their amusing moments, even when they are out on their grim job.

One of the big 'planes which went to Germany with a strong force, recently, had been knocked about a goodish bit by flak.

"Tail-end Charlie," the rear gunner, who had had the pleasure of strafing one or two searchlight units, was thrown against the side of the turret when a shell kicked up the tail of the 'plane.

He lost consciousness, and the next thing he knew was being jerked back to life when the machine crashed.

Scrambling out of the turret, he stood unsteadily for a moment.

Then, seeing dim figures approaching through the darkness, he crawled, as fast as his aching head would permit, towards a hedge.

From there, after a while, he tumbled down the far side into a ditch.

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Maybe, he thought, he'd be able to find some friendly household of Belgians in the morning.

He looked around cautiously, and became aware that in front of him were ranks of dim, upright objects. Maybe they were tank traps.

Crawling carefully out of the ditch, he squirmed across the grass to inspect them more closely.

They were tombstones!

He laughed, softly. "Ought to be safe enough in a cemetery," he told himself, and, returning to the ditch, drew his warm clothing closely around him and went to sleep.

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He woke, suddenly, to hear voices. He was just wriggling into a screen of reeds when he recognised the voices as those of his own crew!

"Well, well, well," said the captain when he eventually recognised his gunner. "But what on earth are you doing in the ditch, Charlie?"

"Hiding from the blasted Huns," said Charlie.

It took them a little time to explain to him that they'd made a crash landing near a British aerodrome, and, finding him missing from the tail turret, supposed he must have fallen into the Channel on the way back!

THE WAR'S NEW S

By A. G. GARDINER

WHEN so cautious and farsighted a man as General Smuts dons the mantle of the prophet the world pricks up its ears. His forecast that the war will end in 1944 is significant, not only for what it says, but for what it assumes.

His date takes the defeat of the enemy for granted. The question for him is not how the war will end, but when it will end. How long will it take to give the knock-out blow to a "groggy" enemy?

The landslide of events in the past three weeks warrants his assumption.

THE FAILURE OF HITLER'S SECOND SUMMER CAMPAIGN IN RUSSIA ALONE WAS SUFFICIENT TO MARK THE TURN OF THE TIDE OF THE WAR.

HITLER SAW THE RED LIGHT. HE BEGAN TO TALK OF EUROPE AS A FORTRESS ON THE DEFENSIVE, AND USED FOR THE FIRST TIME THE OMINOUS WORD "CAPITULATE," SHOWING THE DARK FEAR THAT HAUNTED HIM.

But with the rout of Rommel in Egypt, the collapse of Hitler's scheme of strategy in the Middle East, the descent of the Armada upon North Africa and the unfolding of the grand strategy of the United Nations, the fear became certainty.

He had lost the initiative. The control of events had passed to the enemy. He was no longer engaged in a war on one front—the front he had chosen.

War enveloped him on all fronts, on the steppes of Russia, on the shores of the Mediterranean, on the seaboard of the Atlantic.

Most alarming of all, the weakest gate in his prison-fortress, Italy, was suddenly under an attack from sea, land and air that threatened a fatal breach in the fortress itself.

And behind this avalanche of mighty happenings is the spectre of inexhaustible power. The lightning war that was to be all over before the world could say "It lightens" has become a war of attrition.

IT IS A WAR OF RESOURCES IN WHICH ALL THE ADVANTAGE IS WITH HIS ENEMY. IT IS NOT THEY WHO CLENCH THEIR FIST AND SCREAM THAT THEY WILL NEVER "CAPITULATE." THE WORD DOES NOT OCCUR TO THEM. THEY THINK ONLY OF VICTORY. THEY HAVE NEVER THOUGHT OF ANYTHING BUT VICTORY.

Now they see it ahead, radiating from every quarter of the compass—from Russia, from Africa, from the great aircraft carrier of Britain, from the far Pacific—witness the brilliant naval victory with which America has joined in the glorious tidings of this memorable November.

* * *

And the question, as General Smuts indicates, is not whether the promise will be fulfilled, but when it will be fulfilled.

In making his forecast I think he would probably admit that he has taken a conservative view.

This does not mean that he is likely to underrate the perils that lie ahead. He has had far too much experience of the uncertainties of war for that.

Hitler is at bay. But his resources are still immense. He holds the whole continent of Europe in his grip. He has enslaved its peoples and pillaged its wealth.

The advantage of interior lines is his. He can strike in days where we need weeks—witness the speed with which he has been able to rush reinforcements to the danger spot in the central Mediterranean.

Hitler and his lackey, Mussolini, will be enclosed in this iron vice when the remnants of their forces are cleared out of Africa

But the deterioration in his position is flagrant. He is locked in the embrace of Russia and dare not escape from it.

The vast bulge to the Volga and the Caucasus has added alarmingly to the length of his communications.

His transport is notoriously his weak spot, and the demands of Russia, together with the ceaseless devastation by our bombers, have strained it near breaking point.

Now he needs it at the maximum. He cannot cut off his supplies to Russia. He must have transport to enable him to keep the tottering Mussolini on his feet.

And any day, now that the floodgates are open, he may need transport to cope with a new emergency on the thousand-mile Atlantic coastline.

So with his air-arm. He has not enough to go round. That has been obvious ever since he got bogged in Russia. It is going to be more obvious now.

In a word, now that he has lost the initiative he is likely to discover that a fortress can be too big to defend at all vital points against a well-armed enemy with brains and a coherent strategy.

For this reason I cannot share the alarm expressed in certain quarters that Hitler has some master card up his sleeve—that he will spring a staggering surprise in Turkey, Spain or elsewhere.

I do not doubt that he flogs himself because he did not go for Turkey or Spain or both instead of Russia.

He should have made sure of the Middle East and Africa while he had the chance and before America was in the war.

BUT, HAPPILY, AS I HAVE SAID BEFORE, HITLER IS THE PRINCE OF BLUNDERERS IN BIG THINGS, AND NEVER MAKES THE RIGHT MOVE IN THE RIGHT ORDER.

HIS DAY OF MAJOR SURPRISES IS OVER. IT IS OUR TURN. NORTH AFRICA SHOULD SATISFY EVEN SUCH EMINENT STRATEGISTS AS SIR J. WARDLAW MILNE OR MR. ANEURIN BEVAN.

There is another source of weakness that will become more formidable with every decline in Hitler's prestige. It is true that he has Europe under his heel and hurls his slaves hither and thither.

But the hour that his doom is seen to be sealed he and his New Order will be engulfed in such a holocaust of hate and revenge as this earth has never seen.

And the past three weeks have brought that hour visibly—it may be even startlingly—nearer.

* * *

Which brings me back to General Smuts' forecast. That forecast supposes that this war will outlast the last by a year. Is there

De Gaulle Must S

APART from the welcome saving of life and undoubted military advantages, the half-tragic, half-farcical political intermezzo in North Africa has produced one other important result.

It has rallied all Fighting Frenchmen more closely round General de Gaulle.

Of course, the people of France will have to decide their political future when Hitler is beaten. This will be their right, like that of all other nations, under the pledge of the Atlantic Charter.

Until then, there can be no better trustee than the man who, without hesitating a second, first raised the tricolour standard from the mud in which the men of Bordeaux and Vichy had let it drop.

President Roosevelt's clear statement about the position in North Africa did much to dispel grave doubts among the Fighting French Forces. But the situation still needs to be cleared up.

* * *

Nothing should be allowed to interfere with de Gaulle's position as the only possible leader of France while the war lasts and in the immediate period after victory.

Whatever form of government France may choose eventually, there can be no doubt that the French National Committee, of which he is the head, is at

SHAPE

not reasonable ground for thinking that this allows an unnecessary length of rope for Hitler?

CAST YOUR MIND BACK TO NOVEMBER, 1917, STILL MORE TO THE SUMMER OF 1918. WHO DARED TO THINK OF AN EARLY VICTORY THEN?

Russia was out of the picture. America was only just coming into it. We had "our backs to the wall" in Haig's phrase. The might of Germany was at its maximum.

And it was the old solid Germany under the monarch and the military lords, not a Germany under the lash of the Gestapo and the hypnotism of a crazy, leather-lunged spell-binder.

WE WERE SO CONFIDENT THAT THE WAR COULD NOT BE WON UNTIL 1919 THAT HAIG WAS SHOULDERED WITH THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ATTEMPTING TO FINISH IT IN 1918.

BUT HE WAS RIGHT. GERMANY HAD SHOT HER BOLT. SHE WAS RIPE FOR THE KNOCK-OUT. AND SHE GOT IT.

Comparison is a treacherous thing. But certain big contrasts leap to the mind.

Russia is still our mighty ally. America is vastly deeper in this war than she was in the last. We ourselves are immeasurably more stripped for battle than then.

Italy, it is true, is against us. But is that a loss or a gain?

France is down and out, but she is not all gain to Hitler.

We are supreme at sea and supreme in the air. All Goebbels' propaganda fails to banish the deadly fear that lies at the heart of Germany.

GERMAN "INVINCIBILITY" IS EXPLODED IN RUSSIA AND AFRICA. AND THE LEATHER-LUNGED MAGICIAN IS FOUND OUT AS THE MOST IMPUDENT GANGSTER OF ALL TIME.

IT WILL BE OUR OWN FAULT IF WE DO NOT SO SHORTEN HITLER'S ROPE THIS WINTER THAT HE WILL BE ONLY A HIDEOUS MEMORY BEFORE 1944 DAWNS.

t Speak for France

present more representative of the country as a whole than any other faction.

In the early days, there was a certain amount of hesitancy among some who had followed him when France fell, but all that has changed.

De Gaulle and those closest to him realised how necessary it was to bring in all shades of opinion and soon all Frenchmen—and women—who had managed to escape realised that the only rallying place for the real patriots of their country is under his banner.

* * *

Above everything else, all the energies of the Fighting French Movement have been concentrated on hastening the liberation of their country, not only from the tyranny of Hitler, but also the pro-Nazi and Fascist elements collaborating with him.

That is why, during the last six months, De Gaulle has deliberately and consistently built up the movement of resistance inside France on the masses of working people and the Trade Unions.

Included, too, were large numbers belonging to the political Right who were prepared to set aside all political feeling to liberate France.

It was no wonder, therefore, that this vast mass of opinion inside France was bewildered by the negotiations with Darlan in North Africa.

VICTOR SCHIFF.

★ *What is Germany's strength to face the new phase of the conflict? The severity of losses in Russia has tended to give many people a wrong conception of what is left. Estimates must, of course, be approximate, but careful analysis of known facts gives a fairly good idea*

Germany Still Has Strong Forces

ON the surface it may have looked as if Hitler had only to press a button and another forty odd German divisions were ready to march into France.

A quick order apparently was sufficient to send a German airborne expedition to Tunisia.

"Strategic Reserves"

It is taken as a matter of fact that Italy is being reinforced by new Nazi troops.

And reports from South Eastern Europe indicate that other German divisions are strengthening Hitler's Balkan positions.

A German spokesman emphasised that all these military operations have been carried out without a weakening of Germany's "strategic reserves"—that is Germany's home forces.

Where do all these German troops come from? How many men has Hitler at his disposal to meet the pressing needs of the changing war?

Many military experts have speculated.

From their guarded estimates, from information available from usually reliable and responsible sources, one can reconstruct the disposition of the German forces.

The first surprising result reveals that Germany to-day has probably as many men under arms as when she started the war in 1939.

Then and now the total of Germany's army would appear to be around seven million men.

But Hitler's seven million to-day are, of course, not the same men who took up their battle positions over three years ago.

Of that original German army at least five million men have been put out of commission—killed, wounded beyond recovery, or taken prisoner.

They have been replaced by new recruits and a vast comb-out of German industry and agriculture.

The Russian front still ties up the bulk of these troops.

The Drive for Oil

While it would be wrong to overestimate the number of troops which are tied down at Stalingrad—there have rarely been more than three German divisions fighting on that narrow front—the drive for oil and for the Caucasian mountain ranges is carried on by roughly a million Germans.

An equal number is facing the prospect of a Russian winter offensive from Moscow, Leningrad and even around Murmansk.

Hitler can spare few men from this front, which, in addition, needs about another 500,000 to police the occupied territories, combat guerilla warfare; maintain communications and guard them.

Turn from the East to the West, as Hitler must do, and you will still see at least 40 divisions or over 600,000 men along the coast of the Low Countries and the former occupied France.

According to all reliable reports the 42 divisions which now occupy the rest of France have not been drawn from their numbers.

Further north in Norway not fewer than half a million Germans must cope with the restless population, and man defences along the most vulnerable and extended coastline in Europe.

There have always been around 250,000 German troops in Southern Italy and Sicily, helping the *Luftwaffe* to guard airfields, stiffening the unreliable Italian garrisons.

And there have always been very nearly 100,000 Germans waiting to be sent to Africa to reinforce Rommel.

Hard-Pressed A.A.

These men are now available for permanent duties in Italy, bringing the German troops there up to around 400,000.

Germany's home forces, including the hard-pressed and widely dispersed A.A. organisation, can never drop under the figure of a million men.

They are, however, interchangeable and can be reinforced with about 500,000 men whom Hitler is known to be holding in readiness along "second lines of home defence" in the Baltic and even roughly along the old Siegfried line.

This leaves the Balkans, which may well prove the greatest problem of Germany's military organisation.

It has to cope with the Serbian guerillas, with the restless pro-Russia population of Bulgaria, with the Greeks, whom the latest turn of military events has filled with a new spirit of resistance.

And finally to guard against the possibility of Allied landings.

It is known that 250,000 Germans have been in the Balkans for some time. Eventually their number must be increased, but how is Hitler's headache!

It is a bad headache, as this short survey proves.

On the face of it the German army is still strong. But it is strained to the limit.

What hopes Hitler has of meeting new thrusts at the heart of his Continental stronghold depend on his ability to meet concentrated allied assaults on one selected spot with an equal concentration.

Numbers can no longer do it. Only miraculous mobility, only perfect distribution and organisation could save Hitler. Concerted action at many fronts at the same time may bring disaster near.

The *Luftwaffe* is, obviously, in a worse position, but it is still capable of dealing heavy blows.

As a strong striking force it has virtually disappeared from Russia.

In numbers Hitler probably now has as many men in arms as when he began the war

It has left Rommel in the lurch. It has not made much of a show in Tunisia.

But it has been strengthened in the West, and approximately half the number of its 5,500 front line machines are now stationed there.

They are ready for use at the newly-won bases in Vichy France and available to reinforce the Nazi bid to maintain a wedge in Tunisia.

No doubt also that Air General Loehr in the Balkans and the air commander in Italy are claiming a lot of machines.

Anyway, careful estimates show that the operational strength of the entire German Air Force is about one-third weaker than it was three years ago.

Luftwaffe's Punch

But its bomber forces, which have been used cautiously since their failure at Stalingrad, are liable to make a surprising appearance.

What is to-day described as the "*Luftwaffe* mystery" may be solved to-morrow, and we have got to be prepared.

Then the Navy.

Experts agree that it may be ordered to take an unusual and rare course—fight.

There are big German naval units, including the new battleship *Tirpitz*, in the Norwegian fjords, ready for action any day.

Three light cruisers are reported in the Baltic, but both the big *Scharnhorst* and the *Gneisenau* are said to be out of action for a while. *Scharnhorst* is being repaired in Kiel; *Gneisenau* dismantled in Gdynia.

But the pocket-battleships *Lutzow* and *Scheer*, the cruisers *Hipper* and *Prince Eugen*, some other light cruisers and about 15 destroyers must be taken into account.

500 U-boats

Hitler's principal trump card remains the U-boat. There are at least 500 of them; over 30 are being built ever month.

They can replace the large scale sinkings, but there must be a serious shortage of trained crews.

It will be clear, therefore, that though we have snatched the initiative, there is still a powerful Germany to be dealt with

BIG LIQUOR RAMPS MUST BE STOPPED

THE growing shortage of all kinds of wines and spirits has created a situation which the racketeers are exploiting for all they are worth.

I have already dealt with some of their activities, but a further warning is especially desirable because the racketeers are redoubling their efforts at this moment in the expectation of reaping extra profits from the Christmas trade.

Unless they can be curbed quickly their big profits of last year will be easily eclipsed.

I am told of one man, a comparative newcomer to the liquor trade, who is making over £2,000 a week clear gain.

His agents go about telling club owners, hotel proprietors and publicans that their wants can be supplied if they are willing to pay the prices demanded. And he is literally coining money.

He has even financed the opening of drinking clubs to aid him in disposing of his stocks at fantastic prices. His "secretaries" in these ventures are paid nominees, and their "committees" set up to conform with the law are merely puppets.

Nor does the scandal end with big professional racketeers of his type, though they are admittedly the trade's worst enemies.

Through the lack of Government control of prices, and in the absence of adequate legislation, the position has so deteriorated that even members of the licensed trade are tempted to share "in the money."

Price List Wangle

Licensed grocers and off-licence proprietors, too, are being drawn into the vicious circle. By various subterfuges they get round the set price lists fixed for them by their trade organisations.

Generally, the racketeers work in three categories—thieves, mixers, and receivers (or buyers).

Those in the first two classes fulfil the task of obtaining and "doctoring" the supplies, while the others arrange for their distribution.

Liquor robberies running into tens of thousands of pounds have taken place during the last few months. Huge quantities of whisky have been lost in road and rail transit between Scotland and South-East England.

Last August five hogsheads of whisky and a case of old French brandy, worth £2,600 in all, were stolen from a bonded warehouse at Hay's Wharf, Southwark, London.

The robbery had been well planned. The thieves, who are still at large, cut through a brick wall to reach the spirit vaults, and even left a watching confederate to fix a new padlock on the door while they loaded the stolen goods into a waiting lorry.

Shortly afterwards two men called at a house in Kiln Road, Thundersley, Essex, and asked for rooms. They told the landlady they were travellers, and she let them apartments in the usual way.

They presently asked for the use of a garden shed for storage purposes.

Several packages were brought to the premises by car and deposited in the shed.

One morning a telegram arrived for one of them, and to the landlady's amazement they both hurried away in their shirtsleeves.

They could not have got very far away when several police officers arrived at the house.

Three empty whisky hogsheads were found in the garden shed. A small barrel and 60 bottles of freshly labelled whisky were found in their rooms.

Although the police are now certain that these hogsheads were part of the Hay's Wharf robbery, and that the landlady had no knowledge of the men's real activities, the actual thieves have not so far been traced.

And only just a few months before a similar robbery took place at the same warehouse.

It is likely that the liquor stolen on that occasion was watered down, rebottled and sold by "under-the-table" tactics, but the racketeers have not been found.

Two hundred cases of gin were recently stolen from premises, also in the Southwark district of London, while, barely a fortnight ago, £1,500 of liquor vanished in daylight from a lorry travelling to London from the North.

Robberies in provincial towns have lately been numerous, too—a big consignment disappeared from a Glasgow establishment a week or two ago.

Scotland Yard is trying to track down a gang with headquarters in the Home Counties which is busily engaged in this traffic.

The proceeds of their robberies are taken to specially rented premises where, after being mixed with "hooch," the liquor is bottled and placed on the market.

Faked Labels

Small printers are found to "copy" labels used by genuine firms of distillers and these are pasted on to the bottles to enable the stuff to be passed off as well-known brands.

Scotland Yard detectives recently arrested two men named Alexander Trott and Angus Snapes. With other schemers still at large, these two men had for a long time been mixing a poisonous substance called methylic alcohol with coloured water.

Then, adding whisky, gin or rum, as the case may be, they put the concoctions into bottles bearing deceptive labels and sold it at fancy prices to club owners and publicans as genuine liquor.

They also obtained large supplies of wine made in this country and, "doctoring" it, passed it off as produce of Portugal.

I think Mr. W. R. Howard, the Greenwich magistrate, who sentenced these two men to six months—the heaviest sentence he could pass—made a mistake in treating this case summarily. Had Trott and Snapes been sent for trial a judge might have inflicted much more fitting penalties.

Enough methylic alcohol was found in their possession at the time of their arrests to kill hundreds of people!

Apart from rogues of this type, and there are many of them engaged in this growing traffic to-day, a number of mushroom "manufacturing" firms are making "hooch."

The police know that concerns supposed to be making soaps and perfumes, for which supplies of methylated spirit are necessary, are diverting some of the spirit to hooch-making.

Dare Not Sell

I know a licensee in the Provinces who has a big stock of liquor which he dare not sell.

He did not know when he bought it that it was not good quality spirit. *I can assure the public that he will not sell it,* though he will lose some thousands of pounds.

Customs officers, although they are alive to the menace, are very understaffed.

They have lately taken an increasing number of samples of liquor in different parts of the country for Home Office analysis.

In many cases methylated spirit has been detected in some form or other. About a dozen different forms of "hooch" have so far come to light.

It is said that one speculator has made something like £30,000 in little more than a year from Black Market deals, which include a varying number of liquor sales.

Clearly the present legislation is inadequate, and the Government must act firmly, and quickly, in this grave and dangerous scandal.

PUBLIC BENEFACTOR

Mr. H. Howarth, Gledhill Street, Todmorden, has been awarded this week's £1 1s. for interesting information.

Letters are welcomed about all matters needing investigation or comment. Address: "Public Benefactor," JOHN BULL, 93, Long Acre, London, W.C.2.

BE ON YOUR GUARD

MANY strange collectors are going about just now cadging money or clothes in the name of poor children.

In Leicester, for instance, collectors have been touring from house to house distributing leaflets.

★ ★ ★

These appeal for underclothes, boots and shoes, jumpers, children's clothing, coats, dresses, men's suits, etc., in aid of what is vaguely described as "Ex-Servicemen and Evacuee Families."

The chief collector is a Mr. A. Lappage, of Humberstone Road, Leicester, but it is somewhat curious that his enterprise is not recognised by any official body conversant with charity appeals.

In small print the leaflets say "*all clothes paid for.*" This is very unusual in collections of this kind; why pay for cast-off clothes if they are all intended for charity?

★ ★ ★

While Mr. Lappage may have excellent intentions, his methods are most unorthodox.

I think he would avoid a great deal of justified criticism if he stated on his literature his specific grounds for collecting for "Ex-Servicemen and Evacuee Families," and gave the names and addresses of the people who comprise his independent committee of management.

SWAFFER TELLS YOU . .

ARE PEOPLE SICK OF POLITICS?

● "How can we hope for the unity necessary to shape a new world if we squabble among ourselves over divergent political creeds?" asks a reader. "Every political Party has its narrow, petty prejudices. But the people are getting wise."

If they are wise, they will not get sick of politics. They will learn more about them.

Actually, there is not so much difference among the rank-and-file of M.P.s as my reader thinks.

Certainly there is little squabbling. Never were so many members of all the Parties dreaming of far-reaching schemes of enfranchisement.

They need, for the necessary backing of these reforms, only the backing of their constituents, so that the Party machines shall be stimulated into action. But Party machines will remain. An Opposition is as much a part of our system as is the Government itself.

You wait for the next election! It will rouse the nation as seldom any election has done.

WHY OBJECT TO WOMEN IN TROUSERS?

● Although the G.P.O. has just lifted the ban on slacks for women counter clerks, some people still object. Why?

If Scottish troops can take a pride in wearing skirts—it is because of the insistence by some that they have been allowed to wear the kilt on Active Service—surely women can wear trousers as a war time convenience.

Only this year has the Primate lifted the ban, first imposed by St. Paul in Corinth, against females being bareheaded in church.

Paul's reason was his obvious belief in the inferiority of women—"A man is the image and glory of God, but the woman is the glory of the man"—and this was officially endorsed by the Church for 1,900 years!

Although men have to bare their heads in a court of law, their wives, if they have no hats, have to go out and buy scarves before they can enter!

We shall never progress without agreement on sex equality.

WHAT MAKES A NATION'S SOUL?

● "France will rise again," declared Churchill at the Mansion House.

Many people feel that it cannot happen—until France has been purged of all her corruption in high places, her intrigue and her utter lack of unity.

Greece, now bathed in a new glory, Poland, which resisted to the end, and Norway, because of its martyrdom, will be regenerated with fresh ambitions to regain, to rejuvenate and to rebuild.

A nation's soul is its love of freedom. Millions of Frenchmen have done nothing to struggle for that.

There may be a soul in France. But, if so, it is imprisoned in its own apathy—and from that only a spiritual resurgence can release it.

"JOHN BULL'S" TEN-MINUTE STORY

GRANDFATHER'S MARCH OF TIME

By WILL SCOTT

THE last day in October was old John's birthday, and John, his son, used to hate it more and more as the years went by.

John, his son, you see, had "got on," and old John's birthday, year after year, only served as a reminder to the old man that he himself hadn't got on and now never would.

At any other time of the year they were amiable enough together and pleased to see each other, but old John's birthday was always an excuse for "turning the tap on," as his son used to put it, and it began to get on the younger man's nerves.

It was everything.

Even his son's car, which came round to fetch him to his son's house for his little birthday party each year.

"When I was your age," he said, "I *walked*."

"But I don't *have* to walk, Dad," his son always responded.

"I walked—and I'm no worse for it," old John boasted. "Look at me. Going strong still, at my age."

And the electric fire which his son switched on.

"I don't know what'll happen to the next generation, having it so easy," said old John. "No electric fires when I was a young man. I used to have to harness the horse and take the cart down into the town and fetch the coal myself. Every month. Half a ton. Get it aboard myself and unload it when I reached home. Rain or shine. *Or* snow. And am I any worse for it?"

"Time brings changes, Dad," was his son's answer. "Things are different now."

"I'll say they are!" chuckled old John. "You don't know what it is!"

Even the food. . . . And they really did try to do their best for him in the way of food as his birthdays came round.

"I don't know what it's cost, but it looks as if it cost a fortune."

"That's *real* turtle soup, Dad."

"Oh, is it? I see. . . . Well, I'd never heard of same when I was a young man. And then all these oo-la-la sort of dishes, made up to look like what they're not. And these cakes! They look more like the front of a picture palace to me!"

A sniff, and he pushed his glasses down on his nose and looked closer at the oo-la-la sort of dishes.

"I only hope they're good for you. *Plain* food, I was brought up on. Scotch broth, none of your *real* turtle soup. Rabbit pie, with onion sauce. Currant pudding. Farmhouse bread and butter and cheese. All this a-la-de-bong! Looks all right. But what is it?"

And when they were "sitting round" after lunch, with the old man in the best chair, a tankard by his side:

"What's *that*?"

"That" was a box of chocolates, bought by son for daughter-in-law.

"Well, it's a box of chocolates, of course, Dad."

"Oh, is it! Looks like a treasure chest out of a pantomime to me! Gold lining—blue ribbons—cotton-wool for 'em to sit on! If I'm not poking my nose in, son, what did it cost?"

"Seven and six," said his son.

"Seven and six? For a box of chocolates? Well, my word! When I was a boy——"

"But things are different now, Dad. I keep telling you. The world alters, you know. Time brings changes."

"When I was a boy," the old man persisted, "do you know what I used to get? Every Saturday? *Threepence*. And it had to last till the next Saturday. And do you know what I used to buy with it, round at the village shop? Two bars of plain chocolate, four barley sugar sticks, two sugar mice with cotton-wool tails, and two caramel haystacks."

At first young John thought the old man was wonderful. He didn't believe all he heard, but he liked to listen

"YES, Dad, but——"

"That's all I had to stuff my interior with, and I had to make it last."

"Yes, Dad, but——"

"And here are you giving seven and a tanner at one go for a box of chocolates. And not making it last!"

"Oh, well. . . ."

And about then his son would get up and pretend he saw the postman coming or something. He would go out and lean over the gate and light his pipe and sigh heavily. And even have a word with Smith or somebody, if Smith or somebody happened to be passing.

"It's funny, you know, Smith, old man, the old Dad and I get on fine all the rest of the year, but when it's his birthday. . . . He just has to turn the tap on when it's his birthday. I don't know why. He's at it now. He will keep on and on and on about the days when he had *nothing*. I just have to come out. Get a bit of air."

Yes, it was funny. Perhaps it was the mere act of passing the milestones that made the old man pause and look back down the road. But at all other times of the year he was just as anybody else and his relations with his son were quite normal.

And how the years passed. The old man was fifty, the old man was sixty, the old man was seventy . . .

The boy came. the grandson, young John as they all called him. Young John came and began to grow up. Five, ten . . .

The war came.

At first young John thought the old man was everything that was wonderful. He didn't believe all he heard, but he liked to listen. Most of what old John had to say young John mentally marked as fairy tales, but he liked fairy tales.

LATER on, though, as he grew up, he realised it was all true—and realised it over and over again each year as Grandpa's birthday came round.

And presently began to wonder why each year his father got up and went out and rested on the gate and lit his pipe and had a word with Smith or whoever happened to be passing.

This October, the last day, the old man was seventy-eight, and young John a bit gone twelve. And, of course, the old man came round for his annual party, and, equally, of course, he had to turn the tap on.

The same old things. . . .

"Good, plain food hurts nobody. I was brought up on honest stuff. Scotch broth, none of your fakes. Rabbit pie, with onion sauce. Currant pudding. Farmhouse bread and butter and cheese. . .

"And do you know, young John, what I used to get to chuck about when I was a boy no older than you? Threepence, every Saturday. Threepence. And do you know what I used to buy with it, round at the village shop?"

Which was where John, his son, the in-between John, simply had to get up and go out and lean over the gate and sigh heavily and light his pipe and hope Smith or somebody would come along.

But it wasn't Smith. It was the latest son, young John, the grandson.

The door behind the in-between John squeaked and he heard the old man's voice pouring out for a moment.

". . . Four barley sugar sticks, two sugar mice with cotton-wool tails, two . . ."

Then the door closed and a second later young John was standing beside his father.

"I like Grandad," he said, "but . . ."

"But what?" asked John.

"He forgets we're *rationed*," said young John. "He will keep on and on and on about the days when he had *everything*."

. . . Yet Everything was Different

JUST recently an extraordinary change came over my home town. You could see the change in people's eyes. You could spot it in their voices.

Everything was different.

It was a sunny day. The day before had been sunny, too. The bus at the top of the hill was two minutes late. It had been two minutes late the day before. It is always two minutes late.

★ ★ ★

My neighbour had a bad cold. I asked him how he was, and he answered: "Pretty groggy." I had asked him the previous morning how he was, and he had answered: "Pretty groggy."

Beer at the local was still as scarce, still as poor, still as expensive.

The chimney smoked in exactly the same way.

Radio programmes were just as dull. The brussels sprouts were just as backward.

There was a funeral down the road. As well as a wedding.

Just as, the day before, there had been a funeral and a wedding down the road.

Blank, when I stopped for a word with him, said that he'd have to go bankrupt if things went on like this. He'd said it the previous morning.

Everything was just the same.

If you could have come down from the moon on each day and taken a couple of ptotographs of the home town your two photographs would have looked exactly alike.

And yet everything was different. Even old Blank laughed this time when he talked about going bankrupt.

What had happened? Nothing.

Nothing, that is, in the old home town. Not even within five hundred miles of it. Just nothing. Everything *was* just the same. Exactly. People. Place. Weather. Everything.

Only—we'd had the big news from Africa. The British news from the East. The American news from the West.

And everything was different. You could spot it in every voice you heard. Eyes simply could not keep it dark.

And it made me think.

Once we were all Isolationists, in a way. If nothing happened to us in St. Louis we thought that what happened in Berlin made no difference. If nothing happened to us in London we thought that what happened in Pekin made no difference.

We were wrong. The extraordinary change that came over my home town recently *when nothing happened there* showed me—and some hundreds of others—*how* we were wrong.

★ ★ ★

Things don't have to *happen* to us, here, to *matter* to us, here.

We saw that in a flash when the big news came from Africa.

How can we keep on seeing it? Because if we can, right into the years of peace, we shall be able to leave the messy, mossy world of yesterday on the shelf, where we are all striving to put it.

And what a difference that will make.

A. G.

HUMAN MACHINE

THINK BEFORE STARTING

The Romans had many terse and pithy sayings, all of them reflecting the sturdy common-sense and direct vision that led them to the top.

Here is one that has lost none of its force and truth through the centuries. It is, simply, "Resist beginnings."

Why should we "resist beginnings?"

Well, think of one or two every-day possibilities. Isn't it easier to extinguish a spark than to put out the conflagration?

Isn't it much simpler to choke a river at its source than to deal with a flood?

Isn't it better to enforce sanitation than to deal with the epidemics that dirt can cause?

Yes, it's always best to stop things before they start, so to speak, and it's a rule that applies to moral life as well as to physical things.

That's why self-control is so important a lesson, and why impulse should always be made to take second place to reason.

Mind you, it's not easy to hold oneself in check and to say: "Now, where is this action of mine likely to lead?"

Yet most of our regrets are due to the failure to think even a little ahead, the impatience that resents even a slight halt while we try to see the end that the start might involve.

We can put it in another way: "It's just as easy to start a good habit as a bad one. Why not make sure?"

Of course we can't do more than try to see a little ahead. No one can foresee the future, but he can try. Even trying will prevent innumerable mistakes.

You're bound to do better if you start right than if you start wrong. It's worth while trying to make sure!

★ Rolling down the sea roads, somewhere between here and her port of destination, is a 6,000-ton tramp that gives Hitler's U-boat chiefs bad dreams. You'll see why when you read the almost fantastic story of her exploits told

By COMMODORE PURSSEY PHILLIPS

A Ship the U-Boats Cannot Sink!

CAPT. SMAILL is the skipper. Not one of your big, self-assertive men. More like Captain Kettle, small, dapper, steady as a rock, hard as a man needs to be who goes down to the war time sea in ships.

Every inch of him a sailor!

Yet, when his cargo-boat goes rolling by in an Atlantic gale, seamen on the ships he passes rub their eyes and emit an astonished ejaculation.

I'll tell you why.

The stern is part of one ship; the bows are part of another; and now the 'midships is most modern of all. The missing parts are rolling in the caverns at the bottom of the sea.

But so long as Skipper Smaill is left with a plank to stand on, he navigates it home, has some more built on, and starts out with another cargo.

His ship was first torpedoed over a year ago.

The mighty missile caught the ship fair and square, and blew a hole in her side through which you could have driven a taxi.

Now that ship was carrying a cargo of iron. I have carried both iron and dynamite through war time seas, and there's not a biscuit to choose between them.

Smaill's ship, with its heavy cargo, simply broke in two. The fore part rolled right over and sank in a colossal uprush of water and debris.

Told Goebbels

The after part staggered—and righted. It looked as though a giant knife had cut her squarely off, so as to examine her cross-section.

The U-boat that did the business glided away, and in due course reported to Dr. Goebbels—who passed on the news far and wide by radio to all the world—that the vessel was sunk.

They gave the tonnage, the description, the date; they missed giving the colour of the Skipper's eyes, but that was just an oversight.

In order to frighten our seamen (!) they said he had gone down with all hands.

That would have been all right; but it happened that Skipper Smaill heard the broadcast in his own home, on a short spell of shore-leave before setting sail with his ship on his next voyage.

The same ship!

Yes, Smaill was left on the aft section that still floated; and he performed the almost incredible feat of seamanship of making the damaged engines work, and navigating that blunt, broken half-a-ship home under its own power.

This was no matter of just a few feet of bows gone; nearly half the ship had sunk; but he brought back the rest, apparently without turning a hair.

It Couldn't be!

British shipwrights built a complete new forepart, and this was towed to the docks and built on to the remnant he had sailed back. A complete ship was thus constructed, and Smaill took her out again along the U-boat ridden steamer tracks.

If the German captain who torpedoed him ever saw and recognised that ship, he must have felt that his eyes were playing him tricks.

Early in this year, the half-and-half was torpedoed again.

Again, she was vitally struck. She listed right over as if she would turn turtle; her propeller stuck up out of the water, and her bows went down under. Her cargo shifted, so that in the first storm she would capsize.

But there was something queer about her after part. Again it refused to sink. For the second time it defied the very laws of gravity themselves!

Smaill and his crew got away in boats. They were rowing for some thirty-six hours, and then they were picked up by a corvette.

But Skipper Smaill was not satisfied.

"I believe the old boat was going to live," he persisted. "Now I want volunteers to come and fetch my ship into port. Who's coming with me?

With joyous grins, the whole company stepped forward.

Moving Heaven and earth, Smaill managed to persuade the Powers That Be to send them out to the wreck in an ocean-going tug.

They found her lying as they had left her, stern cocked up, decks awash, rusting, derelict.

The first breath of wind would tip her over and put her down the Locker for good.

Flooded Tanks

Smaill and his men clambered aboard, despite the protests and warnings of the tugsmen.

Smaill went quietly round, climbing slanting decks, swashing through the oil and water that flooded the engines, peering with out-thrust lip at the gaping torpedo-hole in her battered side.

Then he began to give orders.

They took some risks, those men! They flooded tanks, slaved over shifting cargo, flooded more tanks.

Mind you, the ship was already so sluggish and low in the water that it seemed that the admission of another pint of sea-water would put her underneath.

The tug stood off, and her crew sweated with apprehension as the derelict sank lower and lower.

But Smaill knew his ship.

Far from Port

He gradually got her stern under, so that the propellers were below the water again, and the ship, though dangerously under the Plimsoll Line, was more or less trimmed.

Smaill stood on the bridge, and gave the signal for Dead Slow.

A scattered cheer ran breathlessly round her waterlogged decks and was violently re-echoed from the tug as the wreck began painfully to move.

She was five hundred long sea miles from the nearest port.

Whatever her chances when she lay abandoned, there was no shadow of doubt in any seaman's mind that now, with the extra water aboard they had needed to get her on a fairly even keel, she would sink in the first capful of wind.

Overhead, the skies were leaden grey, and the sea ran smooth like oil. The

The mighty missile caught the ship fair and square

clouds were piling up eastwards; there was no doubt a storm was coming.

Five hundred miles, in that state, at the speed she could make, would take a fearfully long time.

Meanwhile, any prowling U-boat could not fail to hit such a sluggish target; and need not use a torpedo, either; one shell would have done for her.

Smaill, small, resolute, steady, stood on the bridge, easing her through the sea. She made way like some direly wounded animal of the deeps.

Aboard the tug, they watched the barometer, and it was steadily falling.

One hundred miles were safely covered; two hundred. . . .

An armed trawler fussed up, to keep watch for submarines, and—if need be—to pick up the derelict's survivors if the storm broke.

'Hitch-hike' Signals

Over the side of the trawler, an officer leaned, and signed with his thumb to Smaill's ship as a pedestrian signals if he is asking for a lift in a car.

From the bridge, Smaill's hard face lightened for a moment in a grim smile.

One hundred miles off shore, as the wind began to rise, two armed patrol boats joined in procession. The merchantman began to list to port, as the wind pressed at her from the starboard.

Aboard the tug that had accompanied her in, the Captain wiped the sweat from his forehead.

The wind was piping free and the waves beginning to run high as Smaill's ship, followed by the rest as a King by his Court, passed round a sheltering headland and into port and safety.

Ashore, there was a wild shouting from the dockside, the sirens of the shipping lying at anchor began to bellow a hoarse chorus, like sea monsters saluting the acknowledged leader of their herd.

And, outside, the storm that had waited, as it seemed, for that moment, broke in wildest fury. . . .

Smaill's ship was "rebuilt" once more, and now it is at sea again, with a sneer for all U-boats running from modern bows past brand-new 'midships to ancient stern!

VOICE

HERE is a graphic description of war in the desert by L./Br. C. E. Fanner, Royal Artillery, serving with the M.E.F. He writes to his parents at Duncroft Gardens, Shanklin, Isle of Wight:

Our driver had nerve! To avoid capture by a pursuing tank he cut straight across a German convoy in broad daylight, and got away with it!

Later, when we were about to be dive-bombed by three Stukas, our lives were saved by the simple expedient of spreading a red jacket on the roof of our truck in lieu of the German signal of a red flag.

It was a case of "Pass, friends"—and they did!

Try and imagine the tension as we hurtled our way in the dark through about forty-five miles of Jerry convoys, trucks and so on. There was added excitement when a British 'plane dropped flares right over us, and then started machine-gunning the enemy column.

. . . We were brought to a special parade, and commended by the Major-General, so a good time was had by all.

BLIMEY—IT'S WILLKIE!

And another of those surprise meetings—this time between A.C.2 T. Bellamy, with the R.A.F. in the desert, and Mr. Wendell Willkie. Writing to his parents at Hoyle Mill Road, Stairfoot, Barnsley, the R.A.F. man says:

I had a marvellous surprise yesterday when I met and shook hands with Mr Wendell Willkie—it was terrific!

Sorry I can't tell you the place, but my pal and I were on leave and were strolling along when we saw a group of men coming towards us.

I gazed hard at one fellow in the party, and says I to myself, "Blimey, that looks like Willkie"—it did, and it was!

So I marched up smartly, my pal giving me moral support, and I was introduced to Mr. Wendell Willkie.

You could have knocked us down with an air balloon! We shook hands very matey like, and then my pal and I lost our nerve a bit and scrammed quick.

I have now started my book of reminiscenes, "Famous People I Have Met—and How"!

WE'RE PROUD, TOO

A JOHN BULL reader, Cpl. R. Mason, R.A.F., stationed at Malta, is now the proud possessor of the British Empire Medal.

He writes to his brother and sister at Hampton Road, Urmston, Manchester:

To-day I was awarded the British Empire Medal, with two of my mates. One is still in hospital in a serious condition.

Don't think that we have been up to tricks. We were just doing our job.

If it had not been for the leadership

WHAT METAL IS THAT?

FOR a longer time than she cares to remember Mrs. L. has had a white metal pin-tray with a finely detailed picture of the Houses of Parliament embossed on it.

She doesn't know what it is made of, but should she put it out for salvage?

The answer is "Yes," for it is probably made of antimony, a metal used for making types for printing.

Another metal from which ornaments are made is "ormolu," or "mosaic gold." This is yellow in colour, and is really a brass containing a high proportion of zinc. All such metal objects should be salvaged.

The chief non-ferrous metals required are copper, brass, bronze, zinc, pewter, lead and aluminium, but whitemetal, solder, nickel, German silver, gunmetal, bellmetal or Britannia metal (used for making cheap spoons, teapots, etc.) are all wanted.

Though the public has not been asked to take useful articles to the salvage depot, the new campaign suggests that in addition to ordinary metal scrap many people could find in their attics and cupboards things which they really do not want any longer, but which the country could use in the war effort.

OF THE TROOPS

of our officer and his splendid courage during the heavy raids we might have cracked up. He was awarded the George Medal, and he deserved it.

I suppose mother and dad were very pleased with the news.

We had four days' leave last week and had a grand time bathing. The sea was only ten yards from our front door.

Don't be surprised if I am home for Christmas; you never can tell!

★ Have you an interesting letter from a relative in the Forces? ONE GUINEA will be paid for each one Published—more if a good adventure story used at greater length—and all letters are returned. 10s. 6d. for Readers' Views. Address all letters to "Voice," JOHN BULL, 93, Long Acre, London, W.C.2.

HASTY DEPARTURE

Crammed into two years, from the age of nineteen to twenty-one, L.A.C., A. E. Darby, R.A.F., now stationed in India, has seen very active service.

During this period he had the good luck to escape from the enemy at Malaya, Singapore, Sumatra, and Java.

He writes to his brother at the Commodore Hotel, Oulton Broad, Suffolk:

This is the first opportunity I have had to write for months and months. . . . Soon after that we had to evacuate, as the Japs were crossing the border only a few miles away from us.

We grabbed the nearest vehicles, anything from an Austin Seven to a three-ton lorry, and made our way south, calling in at aerodromes on our way. Most of them had been evacuated by the time we arrived

So about a dozen of us remained behind with our lorries as a demolition squad, at the last minute blowing up the aerodromes, and then making our get-away, with the Japs close on our heels.

It was a terrible sight to see thousands of women and their families, mostly Chinese, making their way down the roads towards the south.

. . . I was fortunate in leaving Singapore, for I managed to fly with the pilot of a bomber, and we lobbed down in Sumatra, after a four-hour flip.

The flying-field here was miles from anywhere, and our homes were tents erected among the rubber trees.

. . . Then it all started up again. One night we were called from our tents and given a rifle each. News had come through that enemy paratroops were landing.

Sure enough, the next day they came. Hundreds of them landed at an airfield, thirty miles to the north-west of us. Also an invasion party had landed on the coast and once again we were in a tight corner.

But again our 'planes did good work in getting our fellows away.

Eventually I drove the C.O., who had remained until all the men had gone. It was five hundred miles, through the jungle, the road being little better than a cart-track.

Later we arrived at Java, and then India, where I am now stationed.

All I can say is that I am safe, well, and happy, and just dying to receive a letter from home.

THE OTHER MALTA

With the Luftwaffe engaged elsewhere—at least for the time being—troops stationed at Malta are having a more peaceful time, with opportunities to admire the scenery.

Gnr. K. Tottle, H.A.A. Battery, R.A., writes to a friend at Churchill Road, Bristol:

After the many excitements of the past few months we are having an "easy," and so have been able to do a little sightseeing.

The fruit-growing farms here are wonderful. The lanes are picturesque, with blackberries on each side and the overhanging branches of the fruit trees.

Great trouble is taken in producing the pears, each one being covered with a little linen bag to protect them from insects! A quiet life is a pleasant change after our "noisy" periods.

FUN IN ORKNEYS

Stationed in the lonely Orkneys, Sig. H. Fynes writes to a friend at Clarkston Road, Glasgow, telling of "off-duty" amusements there, too:

In our spare time we have been producing a revue called "Over We Go." And it has "gone over" very well all over the islands.

The opening night at Garrison Theatre went with a bang. The boys and girls in the company enjoyed themselves, while the audience made no complaints, this in spite of the fact that I sang six songs!

Which all goes to show that the Forces are tough.

THEY WERE RIGHT

Here is another letter from the Middle East, which shows the confidence of our men, just before the Eighth Army's big push.

Pte. J. Lawson, G.S.I., M.E.F., writes to his brother at Burns Road, Aberdeen:

We have the right officers in the right places at the head of things, and it is remarkable how confident the men are and how eager they are to get to grips with the enemy.

Everywhere there is the feeling that we must shove Jerry, not only right back, but right out—and we can do it this time. We are, in fact, all set to out-Rommel Rommel!

READERS' VIEWS IN A SENTENCE

WHEN baby was born I sent a cable to my husband in India, at a cost of ten shillings. The baby was almost three months old when he got it!—Mrs. E. Makin, Lord Street, Heap Bridge, Bury, Lancs.

★ ★ ★

After a four-hour wait in the out-patients' department at our local hospital I had an examination, which lasted two minutes. I am on essential war work. An appointments system at hospitals would save valuable time, and workers' wages.—A. J. Cook, Motion Road, Norwich.

★ ★ ★

Within ten minutes of entering a transport café, where there were some Service drivers, I learned the locations, strength, and movements of at least six regiments!—W. Corah, Drybrook, Coalville.

★ ★ ★

Can't something more be done about the terrible prices being charged for bits of wood and cardboard knocked together and sold as toys?—D. Shepherd, Burcot Road, Sheffield, 8.

★ ★ ★

Water-tap sprung a leak, which was reported. Workmen next day called and repaired a tap next door, but could not touch mine, as I had no "paper" from the water company!—E. J., Spring Bank, Maescoed, S. Wales.

★ ★ ★

Steaming is fuel-saving, easiest and most economical form of cooking, yet most B.B.C. recipes say "bake."—Mrs. A. E. Bett, Sloan Street, Edinburgh.

★ *Every week Humanist tackles a postbag of human problems and he will help you if you are in doubt. Write to him at 93, Long Acre, London, W.C.2. You will receive a guinea if your letter is quoted on this page (without, of course, giving your name)*

HOW TO DEAL WITH SPIES ON YOUR DOORSTEP

By HUMANIST

TWO American soldiers called to see me the other day, and the curiosity aroused in the neighbours was amusing. "My sister and I are not inquisitive," said one woman, "but we do so want to know!"

Next morning the subject of neighbours cropped up in a letter from a woman reader.

"Is there any law whereby one can prosecute a person for being nosey?" *she asks.* **"If there is such a law, I should like to know about it. I don't think there is a nosier person in the British Isles than the one who lives near me.**

"Her face is never away from the window. She watches everything and everybody, and wants to know the why and wherefore. She once fell through the window in her anxiety.

"If our friends stay a bit late, she is certain to remark on the fact next day. If the milkman should leave any extra milk she asks whether we are having a rice pudding for dinner.

"I could fill a large writing-pad with instances of her nosiness. Sometimes she goes so far as to interfere in our affairs.

"If there is no legal way to put a stop to this annoyance, can you suggest any other way Must we treat it as some form of insanity and just grin and bear it?"

I don't think there is any law to prevent a neighbour from spying. She is not breaking any written law. She just wants to know! It is a sort of hobby with her.

Mrs. Nosey Parker has swarms of sisters—they are everywhere, in town, suburb, and village. She has some male relations, too: Paul Prys and the more sinister Peeping Toms (but Peeping Tom *can* be prosecuted).

We have to endure these nuisances and, if possible, to regard them as a joke. They are not worth worrying about.

One can only conclude that their own lives are pretty drab since they have to find interest outside; but it is a pity they have not something else to occupy their spare time.

One can show resentment and tell them to mind their own business, but that rarely stops them. It is better to laugh at them.

If they try "pumping" for information, one would be justified in telling them the tallest stories one can invent!

A LETTER from a young, married woman in the Services deals with a more serious problem. Her mother-in-law "snoops" on her all the time, and is evidently out to make mischief.

"All went well until I came into contact with a very elderly gentleman," *she writes.* **"He was a real gentleman to all us girls, but his health was bad, and as I have been a nurse I was able to help him.**

"He was a very lonely man and really kindly—just like my old Dad. I love looking after folk; I have always been like that. But after he left us he collapsed and was taken to hospital. He had a very weak heart.

"He wired to ask if I could possibly meet him as he was coming part of the way back by air ambulance on his way to another hospital.

"He was loaded up with luggage, and every minute I expected him to fall. He asked me to help him, and as I was on leave I was glad to do so.

"My mother-in-law found out and immediately thought the worst. To make matters worse he wrote to me afterwards and she opened the letter.

He said that my hubby was a lucky man, and he wished he had me to look after him always.

"She wrote a horrible letter to my husband accusing me of things I have never done and would never do. She is going to get my allowance stopped and separate us.

"I love my husband dearly, but now all my dreams are shattered. It is not worth while trying to be decent to old folk who have no one to care for them.

"Can you please help a worried lassie?"

"Her face is never away from the window"

I wrote to her immediately, assuring her that the husband has no grounds for seeking a separation and that he cannot stop her allowance.

That mother-in-law will probably go on making mischief, but if the husband has a grain of common-sense he will listen to his wife's story before passing any judgment on her.

Frankly, if she were my wife, I should feel proud of her. But generous-hearted people are always open to criticism by those who cannot understand their good nature.

I HAVE not the slightest doubt that scores of girls in the Services could tell me stories of innocent, and even kindly actions, which have been twisted into all kinds of horrible shapes by people always eager to assume the worst.

There is one other sentence in the letter which explains a great deal: "My mother-in-law never wanted her son to get married."

Oh, these possessive mothers who can't bear their boys to grow up, and resent the appearance of another woman.

NATURAL FOLK

THERE'S nothing so futile and pitiful as people who put on side, and no one's really deceived by them, for we can never our real selves hide. Self peers through the flimsy camouflage of Affectation's veneer, and it's plain for others to see when we're not that which we strive to appear.

IT'S not always done from boastfulness, it is sometimes a means of escape. People want to believe that they really are that which they try to ape. But if only they'd understand that "Life needs us all as we are," and that it's the Natural Folk of the world whom we all prefer by far.

SO though it may sometimes be tempting to try to appear what we're not, and to talk and pose about things which we really haven't got, it gets us nowhere in the end, and it loses us so much, for there's nothing in Life that can compare with the homely Natural Touch. J. M.

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A book to help all set owners in the care and simple servicing of their sets, whatever the make, during War-time. . . . . Price 6d.

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We are fighting for Freedom of Expression—the right to enjoy our home life, free from interference. A dark cloud threatens this dear heritage. The challenge is being accepted—not without hardship and sadness—but proudly, knowing deep down in our hearts we must win to protect our home and loved ones. Families are scattered—friends separated—each doing his, or her, job of work. The bond that keeps family and friends together is the Greeting Card. Where every minute is occupied and writing difficult, the Greeting Card expresses, as nothing else can, the ideals for which we are fighting.

THE GREETING CARD and CALENDAR ASSOCIATION
76 FINSBURY PAVEMENT, LONDON, E.C.2.

LAST LAUGH

G. J. (Leicester).—"A thing that sells does not always pay." A practical joke, for instance.

N. N. (Manchester).—"In these days most of us take an extra interest in the weather and look up at the skies more anxiously than of yore." Hoping there will be no raid.

TWENTY (Lincoln).—"I am a patient fellow, but I have no use for the girl with a cigarette always between her lips." No, it doesn't give a fellow a chance, does it?

BERT (Bolton).—"What is the matter with youth, anyway?" Well, it doesn't last, does it?

F. L. (Bath).—"I saw a man filling up his income-tax form at a post office. He then left without buying anything at the counter." He probably thought that he had already spent enough with the firm.

D. J. (Norwich).—"In America a man removed the tyres from his car, left them at a salvage depot, and drove away on the rims." In this country he would be asked where he got the petrol.

S. N. (Bangor).—"We are told that the Fuehrer's headquarters are frequently shifted." But, judging by his speeches, he seldom changes his address.

MANAGER (London, W.).—"Modern entertainment demands a swifter tempo." Street musicians have to make it snappy, especially when playing to bus queues.

F. N. (Chelsea).—"In Germany a pat on the back is not a gesture of approval." Especially with a rubber truncheon.

G. N. (Colchester).—"Having short arms is no disadvantage to the pianist." We are afraid not. The little girl next door just sits close to the piano.

VEGETARIAN (Bath).—"For my protein I used to rely entirely on nuts, but they are hard to get now." So you are nearly off your nut?

SOPRANO (Bradford).—"I have been told that by singing to the troops I am not likely to help win the war." You might, though, if you could sing to enemy troops.

B. F. (Halifax).—"I always miss my wife when she goes out." So the door by now is showing quite a lot of dents?

K. K. (Leeds).—"I am never at home in heavy frosts." Plumber?

OLD BILL: By Bruce Bairnsfather

"Never mind them blondes! Look straight to yer front!"

Side-Slips

DAILY TELEGRAPH.—"The CONTRACT with Hitler's speech last year is pointed out by observers here."

SHEFFIELD STAR. — "Within a week or two female MONTHS will start to climb up the stems of apple trees to lay their eggs."

ROMFORD TIMES.—"During the course of the meeting she was taken ill, and eventually it became necessary to call Dr. D—. An AMBULANCE was applied."

SALTCOATS HERALD.—"BAD sitting-room required with cooking facilities."

MIDLAND DAILY TRIBUNE.—". . . for not having an UNSCREENED front light on a bicycle."

GREATEST OF THESE

● "I am in the depths of despair," writes Ernest Baker, "for I have just been discharged from hospital after an internal operation, and I also suffer from asthma. I have to attend for treatment for at least another year." This applicant served in the last war. In addition to his other ailments, he now suffers from fits.

There are four children under ten years, the baby now being three, which makes it impossible for Mrs. Baker to go out to work and help support the family. Their rent is 12s. 6d. a week, and so badly in arrears that the landlord threatens eviction.

To enable this suffering man to regain some strength he should be able to obtain the special diet ordered, but this is almost impossible on his meagre allowance.

We are assured by a clergyman in the district that this family is in every way suitable for help from our Fund.

We urge our readers to be as generous as possible in their donations for this deserving family. Letters earmarked "Sussex," or for our General Fund, should be sent to the Secretary, JOHN BULL War Sufferers' Fund,* Box 44, 64, Long Acre, London, W.C.2. Acknowledgments are sent where names and addresses are given, but we are equally grateful to those who send donations anonymously.

Lists of subscriptions are kept at this office, and a copy of the current week's will be sent on application.

There are no deductions for administration expenses.

*Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940, as "The JOHN BULL War Sufferers' Fund."

FIRST PRIZE £50—'BULLETS' 1,349

G. Ryder, 26, Helen St., Lower Broughton, Salford, for this "Bullet":—

TO SWELL THE DEVASTATION MONTGOMERY THREW IN BAGPIPES!

£20: G. E. Moss, 19, Pingle Rd., Sheffield. Anything's Possible, So—Overhaul Flags—And Gas-masks!

£10: D. A. Lewis, "Brynceri," Newcastle Emlyn, S. Wales. Not Quite Finished—Ship Yanks Began Yesterday!

£5: C. H. Simms, 70, Surrey Road, Reading. Reading Line—Rommel Threw "CESAR" To

£4: F. Thomas, 5, Eldeman's Row, Pentrechwyth, Swansea. In Hitler's Fortress—Despair—In Dungeons, Rope.

£3: D. Vaughan, 26, St. Mary's Rd., Weybridge, Surrey. Reading Line—Smith, When "Flock's" Endangered.

£2: Mrs. J. E. Nuttall, 184, Bispham Rd., Blackpool. Said Dilly To Dally—"Now? No!"

LAST XMAS CAKES SEE OFFERS NEXT PAGE

£1s.: A. E. Peacock, 1, Wilmer Rd., Shipley, Yorks. Just A Reminder—To Remainder, Rommel's "Remnants."

£1s.: A. C. Brown, c/o Mrs. Curtis, 5, Milo Place The Oval, Gloucester. Dazzling Array—Lily's "Prince"—And "Concoctions."

£1s.: A. D. Leach, 12, Harefield Rd., Brockley, S.E.4. In Hitler's Fortress—"New Order" Includes Azaleas!

£1s.: H. W. Connell, 66, Alexandra Rd., Edgbaston, Birmingham. Said Dilly To Dally—"About Dolly Gray's Pension—"

£1s.: W. J. Champion, 18, Dominion Close, Worthing. Wrecked The Coop—Family, Collecting First Egg!

A list of the winners of 10s. and 20 Winners of 2s. 6d. can be seen at these offices. The 1,000 Merit Awards have also been posted.

7 BIG CHEQUES

WON IN XWORD 301

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(They will also receive Surprise Award at Christmas) Awards value £86 shared between 73 Runners-up.

SEE OPPOSITE PAGE FOR PRIZES VALUE £340

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Raleigh would find just cause for pride in the unflinching courage of our Men of the Merchant Navy who, in spite of perils greater than any of his day get the Convoys through.

On sea, on land and in the skies, in office, factory, workshop, the spirit of Raleigh still abides and thrives.

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BE QUICK for YOUR XMAS FEAST!

VALUE OVER £125 — 1 WEEK X-WORD — 1st PRIZE £100 — RUNNERS-UP AWARDS VALUE £25 — TO 50 4lb. XMAS CAKES — ONE WITH EACH RUNNERS-UP AWARD VALUE 10/- OR OVER

LAST WEEK of XMAS CAKES—DON'T MISS this FINAL OFFER!

TRY John Bull's 10-MINUTE XWORD No. 305

CLUES Answer every clue by entering letter in entry column. 3d. Entry-fee for 1 Col. 3d. 3d. 3d.

	HE MIGHT BE BETTER EMPLOYED		L	O	A		E	R			
2	PROSPECT OF LEAVE AT HOME IS THIS TO SOME MEN IN FORCES	D	R	E	A						
3	SOMETIMES CAUSES AN OUTCRY				H	U		T			
4	IT HELPS PROSECUTION IF THIS OF ACCUSED CAN BE ESTABLISHED	G	U	I	L						
5	DOUBLE CAN DENOTE IF SIGNATURE ON CHEQUE IS CLUMSILY		F	O	R		E	D			
6	PEOPLE INSTINCTIVELY DO THIS WHEN EXPECTING DOWNS				H	I		E			
7	IT MUST BE ADMITTED THAT CULTURE GIVES SOMETHING TO	G	R	E	E						
8	SOME CHILDREN DO THIS WHEN EVER LASTINGLY PREACHED AT		H	A	R		E	N			
9	MAY OCCASIONALLY EXPRESS MOST GRAPHICALLY WHAT PEOPLE THINK	I	D	I	O						
10	MEN ARE SOMETIMES TOUCHY ON SUBJECT ABOUT WHICH THEY FEEL THIS				S		R	E			
11	ACCOMPANIST'S TUNE OCCASIONALLY PUTS SINGER IN BACKGROUND		F	O	R		E				
12	IS APT TO GET TOO MUCH WATER AT TIMES		H	O	L						
13	DATE SHOULDN'T BE ALLOWED TO DO THIS WHERE FOOD'S STORED	U	N	F	E		T				
14	WEARNESS MAY WELL OVERTAKE BEAST LONG PURSUED BY		H	U	N		E	R			

I agree to enter in accordance with Rules and enclose necessary P.O. or stamps entry-fee, including 1d. for "Gazette," dated Dec. 16

P.O. Value..... **CLOSING POSTMARK**

No. ..... **MONDAY, DEC. 7.**

Signed .....

Address .....

305.

8 COLUMNS FOR ONLY 1/6

To the 4 cols. on coupon you may add extra 4 cols. in blank margin on right. Total entry-fee for 8 cols. is 1s. 6d. only, including TWO FREE.

CUT ROUND THIS LINE

RULES 1.—First Prize in Bullets will be awarded for best Bullet received, and other prizes in order of merit, the test being cleverness, aptness and originality. Xwords First Prize will go to the competitor submitting most meritorious set of Answers to Clues provided, test in this case being aptness and accuracy of Answers in relation to Clues. Prize divided in event of tie or ties. Awards value £25 between Runners-up. Not more than one Xword Prize per contest allowed to any one entrant. Complete Xword in ink, not pencil. 2.—The Editor undertakes that every entry in Bullets and Xwords shall receive careful consideration by staff of competent adjudicators. 3.—To cover 1d. Bullets charge and entry-fee enclose P.O. or stamps—6d. per two Bullets or 6d. per two Xword columns used. Two Xword columns FREE with each six paid. Two Bullets FREE with each four paid. If P.O. used, make payable to JOHN BULL, cross & Co., write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Members of H.M. Forces allowed half-rate entry-fee if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated. 4.—Entries are only accepted on the condition that results of this week's Contests, to appear in "John Bull" dated December 26, also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Employees of Odhams Press Ltd. and their families not eligible.

INCREASED XMAS OFFER

RUNNERS-UP AWARDS — FIRST PRIZE £50 — VALUE OVER £200 — 100 FINE 4lb. XMAS CAKES

£20 £10 £5 £4 £3 £2 36/- 30/- 34/- 32/- 30/-

1,000 MERIT AWARDS

USE any of these "EXAMPLES"

TO make a Bullet simply add TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the Examples below. Joy Wire Day—Friday, Dec. 18.

PLAN FOR VICTORY
MUSSO WISHES
GALLANT ARMY
FOR THE FREE
COUSIN SAM
GETTING A MOVE ON
IN FRANCE
ONE WAY OUT
POINT TO REMEMBER
CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

PICTURE OF THE FUTURE TO BE HAPPY
OUGHT TO BE SAVED
CONJURER CUPID
IN CAME THE BROWNS AND HAPPY FAMILY
NOT FORGOTTEN
WHILE DAD'S HOME
MIDST SNOW AND ICE
IT'S THE LAST ONE, SO

Six "Examples" below are for completion with any ONE additional word of your choice in the position indicated by dotted line.

PRESENT FROM .....
FOR A BIT OF.....
MAN WHO'S BEEN.....
FIT FOR THE.....
IN THE HEART OF.....
CAUGHT IN THE.....

BULLETS 1,349 RESULT appears on page 14

EXAMPLE
BULLET
EXAMPLE
BULLET
EXAMPLE
BULLET
EXAMPLE
BULLET

2 FREE BULLETS allowed with 4 paid—enter in blank margin below.

I agree to enter in accordance with the Rules and enclose P.O. or stamps entry-fee at the rate of 6d. for each two paid Bullets I am entering, my remittance including 1d. for "Bullets" Bulletin, dated December 26

P.O. Value .....
No. .....
Closing Postmark Monday, Dec. 7. **1,353**

Signed .....
Address .....

CUT ROUND THIS LINE

ADDRESS ENTRY "Bullets" No. 1,353—or Xword No. 305, "JOHN BULL," LONG ACRE, LONDON, W.C.2. (Comp.)

RULES FOR RAYON

RAYON is a wonderful fabric, but it needs knowing if you are to get the best out of it. *Though flexible and hard wearing when dry, it temporarily loses almost half of its strength when wet.* So when you are washing rayon things handle them tenderly. Don't soak them—dip them. Don't boil them—use lukewarm water. Never wring or twist them. When you hang them up to dry hang them evenly so that they do not pull out of shape.

"I like to smooth things out, you know, so perhaps you'll allow me to give you a few hints. First remember that rayons can't stand too much heat. Try me on a pad of paper. If I'm too hot, a scorch mark will show in 20 seconds. Rayon fabrics should be ironed on the 'wrong' side and you should always press one thickness at a time to avoid creases. Lock-knit fabrics should be ironed *across* the weave to prevent stretching."

MIND THE LADDER! Look out for ladders, tears and split seams. Always keep a needle and cotton handy—you can often save a garment by "first-aid" treatment, before the trouble can develop seriously.

Mend and make do
To save buying new

5 ISSUED BY THE BOARD OF TRADE

CABINET MEETING

No Cabinet ever met with greater, grimmer determination than the Committees who plan their own Group Savings campaigns.

They give their time freely and gladly because they know that money saved is a vital contribution to Victory. They rely on you. Put your money into National Savings Certificates—either through a Savings Group in your Street, Works or Office, or through the Post Office and Trustee Savings Banks. Back them up—give them the encouragement they deserve . . . and at the same time you will be doing something practical in helping to win the war, and you will be securing your own future too.

Just to remind you—Savings Certificates cost 15/- each, or they may be bought by instalments with 6d., 2/6 and 5/- Savings Stamps.

BUY SAVINGS CERTIFICATES

Issued by the National Savings Committee

BRAKE SAFELY WITH A COASTER

A simple backward pressure with the foot will stop you SAFELY in a second.

With a PERRY COASTER HUB you'll ride EASILY . . . with both hands free for steering or signalling. No adjustments to make. Just a drop of oil once every two months.

FULLY COVERED BY THE PERRY GUARANTEE

PERRY
OF CHAIN FAME
COASTER HUB
FREE WHEEL AND BACK PEDAL BRAKE

Please apply to your dealer or factor.

for natural pedalling

CUT THEM INTO SLICES

and make the most of these two big-value chocolate coated candy bars

They are big not only in size but in delicious goodness, made from the very finest materials obtainable to-day (including separated milk and rich-with-energy glucose).

MARS BAR 2½D — STARRY WAY 1½D

BEST cooks say BORWICK'S BAKING POWDER

—The Best in the World

WHISKERS WIPED OUT BY THE OLIVE OIL SHAVE

Multiplies itself 250 times in creamy, strong-bubble lather that lasts at least 10 minutes; softens the beard in one minute; holds bristles erect for shaving. Still contains its generous pre-war quantity of skin-soothing olive oil.

But—all glycerine is now needed for munitions. So there's none in Palmolive Shaving Cream and it may dry up unless you

KEEP LID FIRMLY CLOSED

1/8 & 2/6 *Including Tax.*

SAFETY FIRST

The unrivalled germ-killing action of Cuticura brand Ointment is your best possible safeguard against septic poisoning in cuts and all skin abrasions. Boils, chronic ulcers, rashes, festerings and gatherings all swiftly yield to its irresistible healing power.

Obtainable at all Chemists and Stores.

Cuticu OINTME

NEW!
Optabs
EYE LOTION TABLETS
For the Preservation of sight and the Relief of Eye Strain
One Optabs Eye Lotion Tablet in ordinary tap-water makes an eye bath full of stimulating lotion. Optabs and for 1 yet sparkle again.
10d. 3/4 & 5/6

VENO'S LIGHTNING COUGH CURE WILL STOP THAT COUGH

SOLD EVERYWHERE

1/4 & 3/3 per bottle *Inc. Pur. Tax*

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